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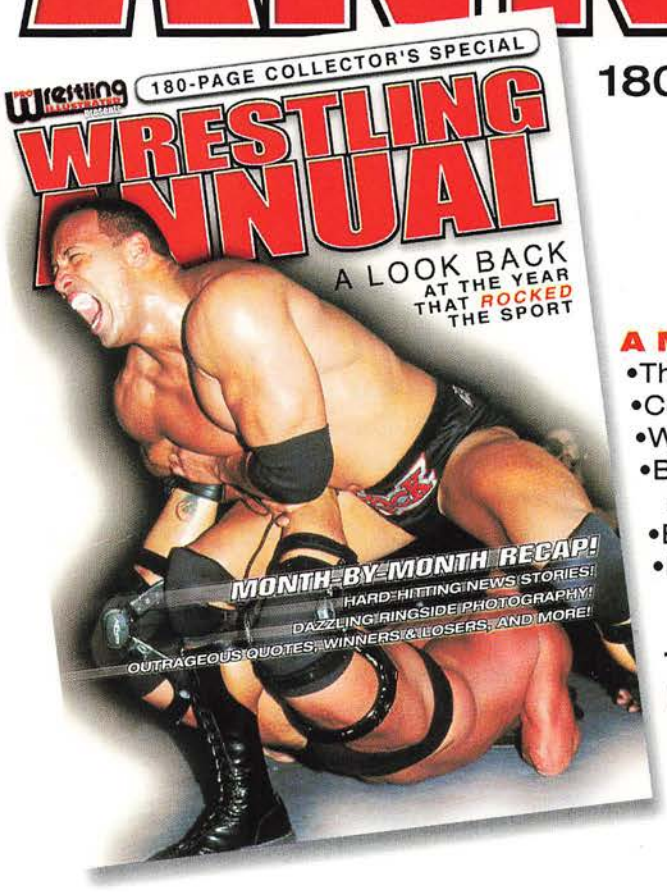
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FROM THE DESK OF...

RIC FLAIR IS a liar. So much so that when he admits to being a liar, you have to wonder if he's telling the truth even then. Flair may have disappointed some of his old-time fans with his admission on *Smackdown* that his career-long claims that the NWA/WCW was superior to the WWF were just the rants of a company loyalist, and are now to be disregarded as lies. I am not among them. I say Flair is lying about having lied. And you know you can always believe me.

During the 1980s, when Flair was at the height of his brilliant career, the question over which wrestling federation was superior—the WWF or NWA—was hotly debated. The WWF had become a national entertainment force and had the world's most recognizable superstar, Hulk Hogan, as its flag-bearer. The NWA, which years later would relinquish its national identity to WCW, had a far smaller nationwide following. NWA fans, however, clung to the belief that while the WWF was larger, it wasn't to be taken as seriously as their federation and their champion.

Flair was their champion. He was The Man.

From September 17, 1981, when Flair defeated Dusty Rhodes to capture his first world title, until the end of the decade, the "Nature Boy" was *without* the title belt for a total of 336 days. He was voted *PWI's* Wrestler of the Year five times during the 1980s. Hogan, on the other hand, was Flair's runner-up four times and captured the top honor but once during that time frame.

To the best of my knowledge, Vince McMahon never made a move to steal Flair (who was usually tied up in long-term contracts), but he did keep the "Nature Boy" in his radar. At a time when Vince would rather give up his first-born than acknowledge the competition's champion, McMahon was trapped into doing so while taking phone calls as a guest on Larry King's *Home Team Sportsbeat* in 1986.

Asked to assess Flair's chances in a match against Hogan, McMahon discounted the possibility of such a match taking place, but went on to say, "Some of the athletes involved in [the NWA] are excellent athletes, and Ric Flair happens to be one of them." When King asked him if he would like to have Flair in the WWF, McMahon replied, "Sure would."

We all know that what Vince wants Vince gets. Five years later, Flair signed to wrestle in the WWF. And he didn't arrive empty-handed. Flair wore a title belt that he claimed proved he was champion of the world. Officially, it was a bogus claim. Hulk Hogan was champion of the WWF and Lex Luger was the champion of WCW. Unofficially, however, Flair's claim was legit. Flair had left WCW over a contract dispute and was stripped of the title. He never lost in the only place that really matters—the ring. By the time he captured his first of two WWF World championships by winning the 1992 Royal Rumble, he no longer had a need to tote around the "world" belt, and that controversy died.

Flair didn't stay in the WWF long, but his success there not only legitimized him as an all-time great to any remaining skeptics, it also legitimized the federation in which he had spent the majority of his career. If Flair could twice be the champion of the WWF after his prime, what did that say for the Flair of the 1980s and the league in which he competed?

Flair knew the answer to those questions long before he arrived in the WWF a decade ago. Some say that he did a disservice to his legacy and that of the NWA and WCW with his *Smackdown* speech. I won't rush to judgment on that. Two things about Flair: He is very calculating, and he does not kiss butt. If Vince McMahon is of the belief that he was able to score a victory in the revisionist history books by coercing those statements from Flair, he would be wise to consider the very nature of the "Nature Boy."

Stu Saks
Publisher

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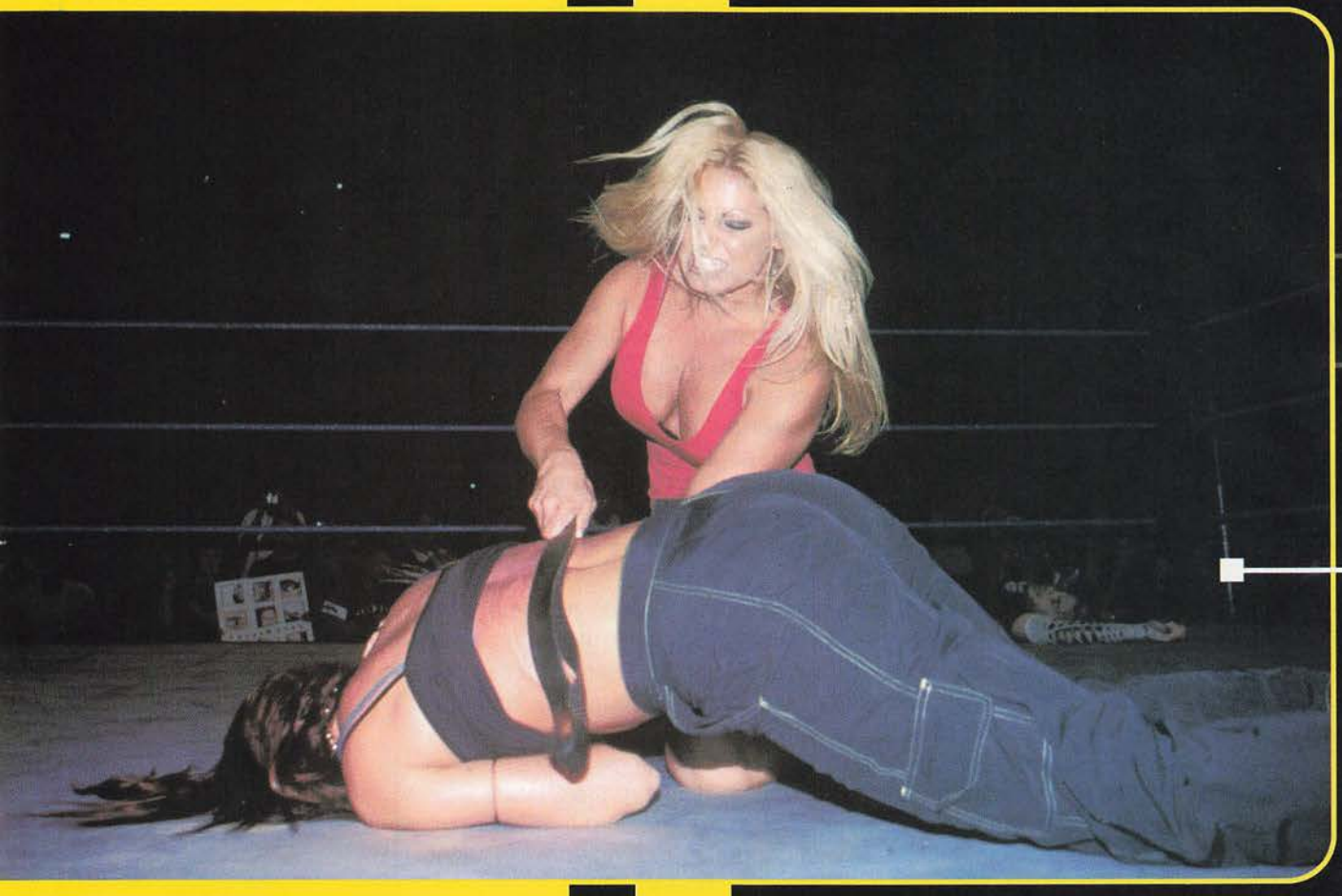

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Rob Van Dam by Frank Vitucci

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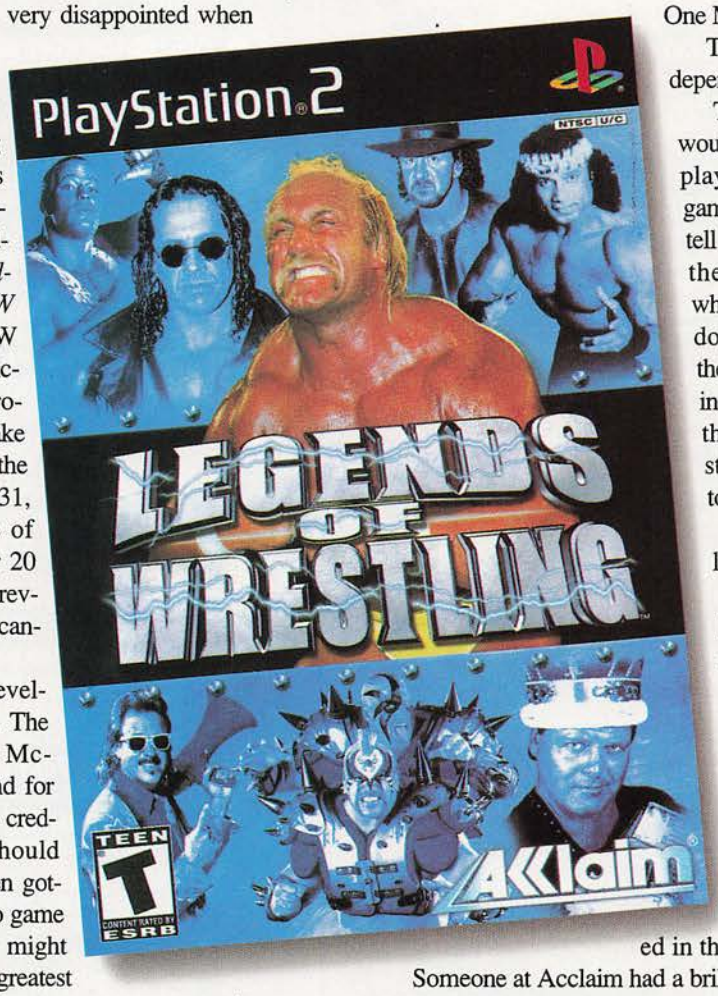
before the bell

Compiled by Will Welsh

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING NOT SO LEGENDARY

Acclaim Entertainment Inc. has had a rather turbulent association with professional wrestling. The company held the WWF video game license when the wrestling boom of the late-1990s initially struck, and sales for now-classic Acclaim games like *WWF War Zone* and *WWF Attitude* were very impressive. The company was very disappointed when the WWF opted to award the license THQ in 1998.



Acclaim rebounded by capturing the licensing rights for ECW games. Its partnership with ECW produced the only two ECW video games ever, *ECW Hardcore Revolution* and *ECW Anarchy Rulz*. But when ECW went under in early-2001, Acclaim was left without a promotion for which it could make games. Considering that for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2000, the ECW franchise of video games accounted for 20 percent of Acclaim's gross revenues, the loss of wrestling cannot be overstated.

That's why Acclaim developed *Legends Of Wrestling*. The move took some Vince McMahon-sized grapefruits, and for that, Acclaim deserves some credit, but perhaps Acclaim should have waited—or maybe even gotten out of the wrestling video game market altogether. *Legends* might feature some of the sport's greatest stars ever, but that doesn't mean it's worth spending $50 on.

Honestly, not even a roster featuring Hulk Hogan, Bret Hart, and WWF stars like Rob Van Dam (who signed on before joining the WWF) and Jerry "The King" Lawler (who put his John Hancock on the dotted line while on hiatus from the Fed) saves this game.

As the title indicates, though, *Legends Of Wrestling* is filled with ...well, wrestling's legends. Along with Hogan, Hart, and Lawler, the game features men like Harley Race, The Iron Sheik, Terry Funk, The Road Warriors, The Rock 'n' Roll Express, and Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka, among many others. Unfortunately, many of those others should have been left off the roster. Mike Von Erich? One Man Gang? Koko B. Ware?

There are more legendary independent stars.

Those lackluster additions would be forgivable if the game play was strong. It isn't. The game's manual barely begins to tell you how to get started, and the official strategy guide, which sells for an absurd $15, doesn't add much depth, either. After two hours of playing and meticulously studying the manual three times, we still couldn't figure out how to scale the top rope.

That's downright ridiculous.

As for the graphics ... let's just say that they're not exactly top of the line. The crowds are sparse and the arenas are only slightly more impressive. The wrestlers look slow and bulky, and it looks like there are about four or five body types for all 42 wrestlers included in the game.

Someone at Acclaim had a brilliant idea when the *Legends Of Wrestling* idea was conceived. It's a shame that its designers couldn't do it justice, especially when there's uber-competition like *WWF Smackdown 2: Just Bring It* on the market. We give *Legends* two suplexes out of five.

THE STUPID FILES

The WWF has a wonderful family of Web sites. We've profiled many of them on the pages of this very magazine. Not only are they gorgeously designed, they're also kept up to date with the latest news. It seems like it's only a couple of hours after *Raw* and *Smackdown* go off the air that TheRock.com and StoneCold.com are updated with photos and stories from that night's event. Better Web management truly won't be found elsewhere.

We do have a gripe with the fed's Web development team, though—and it's a rather big one: Stacy Keibler and Torrie Wilson were still not a part of WWFDivas.com as of press time. This is while ex-WWF employees like Chyna and Tori were still being featured prominently on the site. (Click on the New York and Hedonism links that are found on the divas' main page if you want to see what we mean).

We think it's time to get this sorry situation rectified. The WWF has had since the summer (and, realistically, even more time than that), to get hot photos of Stacy and Torrie up on the divas' site. Since their arrival in the Federation, they've become two of the WWF's most prominent female performers, only slightly behind Trish Stratus and Lita in terms of their popularity. Yet fans of Stacy and Torrie are blockaded when they attempt to go online and find photos (and videos) of their favorite WWF divas.

Even weirder, however, is the fact that Debra, Ivory, Terri, and Jacquelyn all have their own personal sections of the site devoted just to them. How often have these four women appeared on WWF TV over the past few months?

It's time for the WWF to get its divas in order. This travesty has been going on for far too long now.

Speaking of travesties, a funny thing happened at the WWF's December pay-per-view, Vengeance: Triple-H didn't appear. This is after fans in the San Diego market, where Vengeance was held, were led to believe that Triple-H would be there, as a series of ads strongly hinted that he'd be making his return at the pay-per-view. There was also this item that appeared in that Sunday's *Parade Magazine*, which is distributed as an insert by more than 300 Sunday newspapers: "After extensive surgery for a ruptured quadriceps muscle and months of physical therapy, Hunter Hearst Helmsley (born Paul Levesque) returns tonight in a pay-per-view match on In Demand TV."

While we can't be sure, it's hard to believe that *Parade* would print that information without talking to the WWF beforehand and confirming it with someone from the Fed.

Not surprisingly, Triple-H fans everywhere weren't happy. Howard Finkel was given the sorry job of entering the ring after the Vengeance main event and telling the fans still in attendance that the show was, indeed, over. For his courage, he received a very loud chorus of boos and heard some very unfriendly (yet very colorful) four-letter words directed his way.

The Fink didn't deserve such derision. The WWF, however ...

Basically, if the Fed is going to advertise a wrestler for a particular show—and especially for a pay-per-view show in which ticket prices are higher than the norm—it had better make sure that that wrestler is going to be able to make that appearance. Not only did the WWF likely lose some fans in San Diego, it also disappointed a large number of pay-per-view buyers who expected to see Triple-H as well. And disappointed buyers don't always turn out to be repeat buyers.

The WWF can't afford mistakes like that anymore. Maybe a few years ago, but not anymore.

WE HEARD THAT!

"I think it has a lot to do with the crowd participation part of it. They get to be a part of that. I went back and watched old tapes of when I first started doing it. They just sat there. Eventually, Jerry Lawler started to get over the worm and then I started ending it with the 'Hoo, hoo, hoo.' I was so blown up that I didn't even realize I was doing it, but the fans were doing it along with me."

—Scotty Too Hotty, in an interview with wrestlingobserver.com

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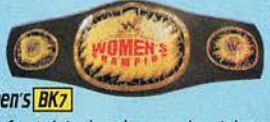

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Venis • Undertaker • Edge • Stone Cold
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Big Boss Man • Michaels • The Rock
Shane McMahon • Kane • Ken Shamrock

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Big Show • Gangrel • Christian • Bob
Holly • Undertaker • Vince McMahon

Fully Loaded Series 1
Kane • Triple H • Al Snow • Billy Gunn
• Road Dogg • The Rock

Fully Loaded Series 2
Stone Cold • Test • Road Dogg
The Rock • X-Pac • Shane McMahon

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Undertaker • Stone Cold • The Rock
Mankind

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X-Pac • Droz • Stone Cold • Mankind
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"There are a lot of people who have been waiting for me to kind of take that next step, so I think a lot of people are excited about it. And now it's my job to piss them all off and make them realize that they shouldn't have wanted me to get this far, because now I'm going to be out of control."

—Chris Jericho, in an interview on wwf.com

"They told me that gun can shoot up to 60 miles away. This one shoots 100 miles. We can take out Philadelphia right here if we wanted."

—Tommy Dreamer, in an interview on wwf.com that took place on board the New York City-docked U.S.S. Intrepid

"Randy would come home from school with his tie off to the side, and his hair a mess, and I knew he'd been fighting. He couldn't take anyone saying a bad word about his dad if he'd lose a match. Lanny was calmer. He'd walk away. But not Randy."

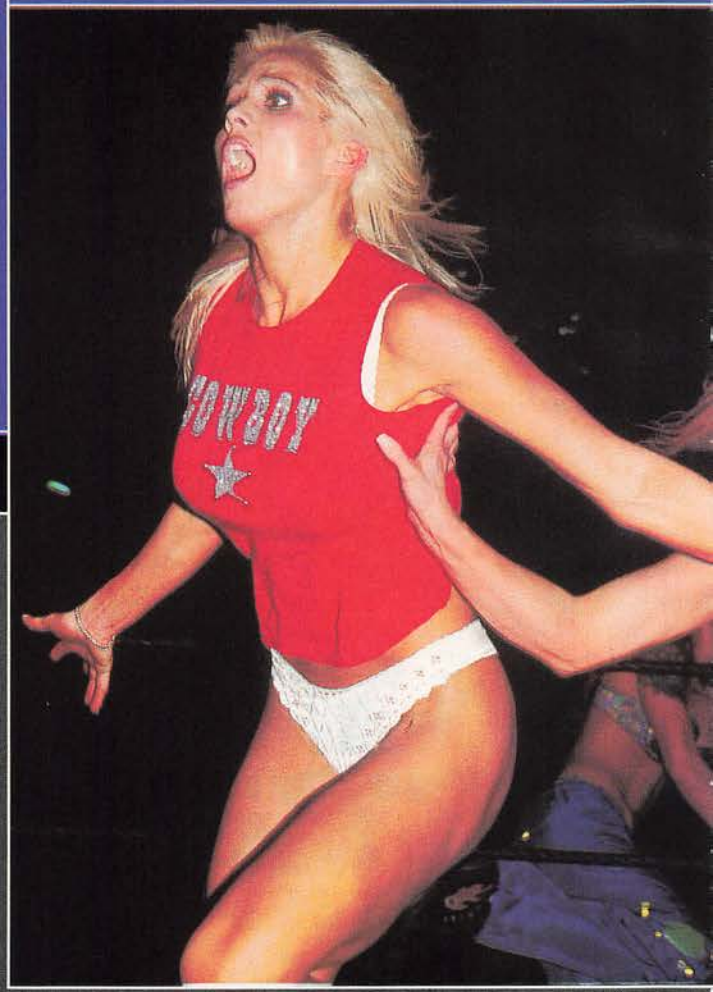
—Judy Poffo, mother of Randy "Macho Man" Savage and husband to Angelo Poffo, in an interview with the *St. Petersburg Times*

"Good things come to those who deserve it."

—Bret Hart, responding to Chris Jericho's undisputed WWF title win in his weekly *Calgary Sun* column

caption me!

Think you're a better writer than the editors here at *PWI*? Here's your chance to prove it, punk! This picture of a partially dressed Torrie Wilson (who looks slightly mortified) needs a short, concise, and downright uproarious caption. If you think you're up to the task, e-mail your zany quips to PWIFocus@aol.com or slap a 34-cent stamp on an envelope and snail-mail it to "Caption Me!" Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Three months from now, we'll share with you the best of the bunch—and the funnier the better.



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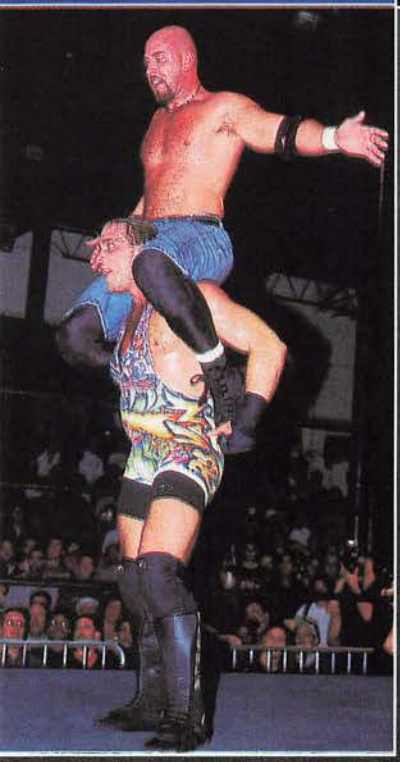

"Hey, Rob, I'm the king of the world!"
—josh2006@bellsouth.net & Jeffrey Gilbert, Nineveh, IN

"Hey, Justin, can you see the WWF calling for you?"
—Kiazen100@aol.com

"Can you see the parade yet?"
—Eddie Huff, Fordsville, KY

"This wasn't what I had in mind when you said I'd reach new heights in the WWF."
—Jonathan Goldstein, San Jose, CA

"Well, this is about as high as I'm gonna go in the WWF!"
—VANTERMINATOR1 @activemail.co.uk

"Hey, Rob, you're right, there is a guy in the last row with a `You're Still Aldo!' sign!"
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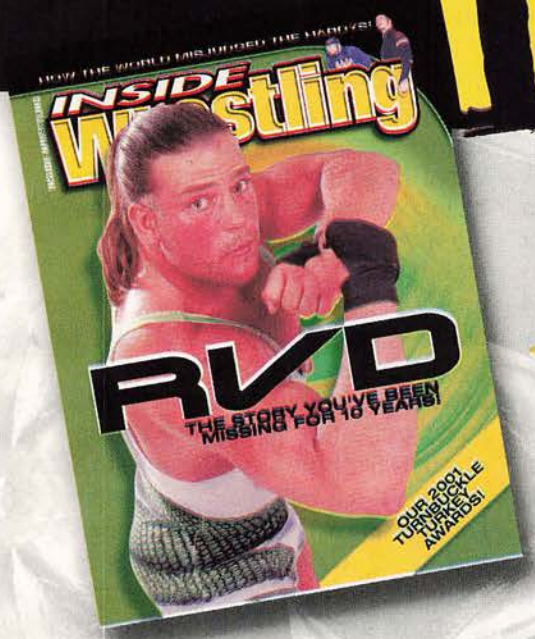

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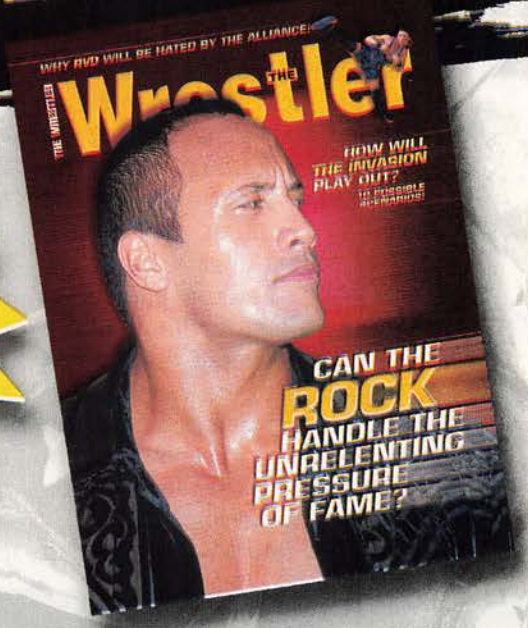
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RINGSIDE

With Will Welsh

BRET HART. JEFF JARRETT. Buff Bagwell. Road Dogg. Brian "Grandmaster Sexay" Christopher. They are five big names in wrestling, yet because of the current North American situation, all five find themselves without consistent gainful employment on this continent. Cast out of or not wanted by Camelot (the WWF), they had to take their wares elsewhere. Well, elsewhere happened to be Europe and Australia, where all five men delivered themselves into the hands of the World Wrestling All-Stars promotion, a group that has been running shows in front of sellout and near-sellout crowds for the past few months.

And now the WWA is looking eastward. Very far eastward, actually. Unless something drastic took place since press time, the WWA should have already visited the land of the burning sun, Las Vegas, for its first live North American pay-per-view—and **"Big Poppa Pump" Scott Steiner** and **Randy "Macho Man" Savage** likely came along for the ride as well.

Unfortunately, the February 24 event will have already transpired by the time you read this. But the WWA's unexpected and sudden jump into the North American pay-per-view arena is big news and demands coverage now if for only one reason: No matter how we look at it, the first time a promotion runs a pay-per-view in the United States is the first time it tries to go legitimate with the entire North American audience.

Heading the group is **Andrew Macmanus**, an Australia native with a background in concert and other types of entertainment promoting. Not only does Macmanus have the finances to make it work, he also apparently has the know-how. His plan for the WWA is far different than other plans we've seen for various startup promotions. In fact, if reports from the WWA are correct, his plans are actually quite modest—which is why the WWA could work.

Instead of trying to move at a breakneck speed into the North American market, Macmanus seems content to keep the promotion's focus on Europe and Australia, two markets that have been mostly shunned by the WWF in recent years. (The last few years have seen the WWF run only a PPV or two in the U.K. and nothing else.) By keeping the number of dates the WWA runs relatively low—reports say Macmanus is looking to run about 75 shows per year—the WWA will not oversaturate its markets. By the time the WWA comes around for a second show, a lot of time will have passed, making the show a must-have ticket for wrestling fans in the area.

Interestingly enough, the WWA's closest and most dangerous competitor is **Jimmy Hart's** XWF, which I reported on in this column last month. The competition, though, is not over a fan base. Instead, it's over the talent that could draw a fan base. While WWA wrestlers and XWF wrestlers are allowed to work independent shows on their own time, they're not going to be allowed to work each other's shows. So far, even with its center of operations overseas, the WWA appears to be putting together a far stronger locker room than the XWF, as most of the WWA's headliners are still men in the prime of their careers, while the XWF's headliners are mostly men closer to the end of theirs.

For all those wondering when Jeff Jarrett will be returning to the WWF, don't hold your breath. He's doing quite well as the heavyweight champ of the Australia-based World Wrestling All-Stars, a promotion that scheduled its first North American pay-per-view for February in Las Vegas. Many other former WWF and WCW stars are also competing for this company.

It should be interesting to monitor the progress of both promotions over the next few months.

In a cost-cutting maneuver, the WWF released a number of developmental wrestlers in December, many of which have some name recognition because of their time in WCW. Among those cut from the Fed were **Alan Funk** (**Kwee Wee**), **Lash LeRoux**, **Jimmy Yang**, **Evan Karagias**, **Kid Romeo**, **Elix Skipper**, **Reno**, and **Russ McCullough**. At the same time, **Essa Rios** was cut from the WWF's main roster. It's hard to imagine that most, if not all, of the above wrestlers will be looked at hard by both the XWF and the WWA.

The NWA heavyweight title fiasco is finally over, as the promotion now has an undisputed heavyweight champion. On December 15 in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, **Shinya Hashimoto** defeated **Gary Steele** and **Steve Corino** in a three-match triangle elimination setup to fill the title vacancy. Corino pinned Steele in the opening bout, and Hashimoto then handed Steele his second loss of the night in the second match. This set up the third and deciding bout, which pitted Corino and Hashimoto against one another. In a very cold building and in front of about 250 fans, Hashimoto captured the title after putting Corino away with a brainbuster. After the match, a masked man attacked Hashimoto, and as the two men were being separated, the mask was removed, revealing former NWA champion **Dan "The Beast" Severn**. Hashimoto is now expected to defend the title in Japan for a couple of months before returning to the States and giving Severn a title shot.

Ed Whalen, who will always be remembered as the voice of Calgary's Stampede Wrestling, died on December 4, just a few days after suffering a massive heart attack.

Although he was loved by most Stampede fans,Whalen was a controversial figure behind the scenes. Because he had a definite idea of

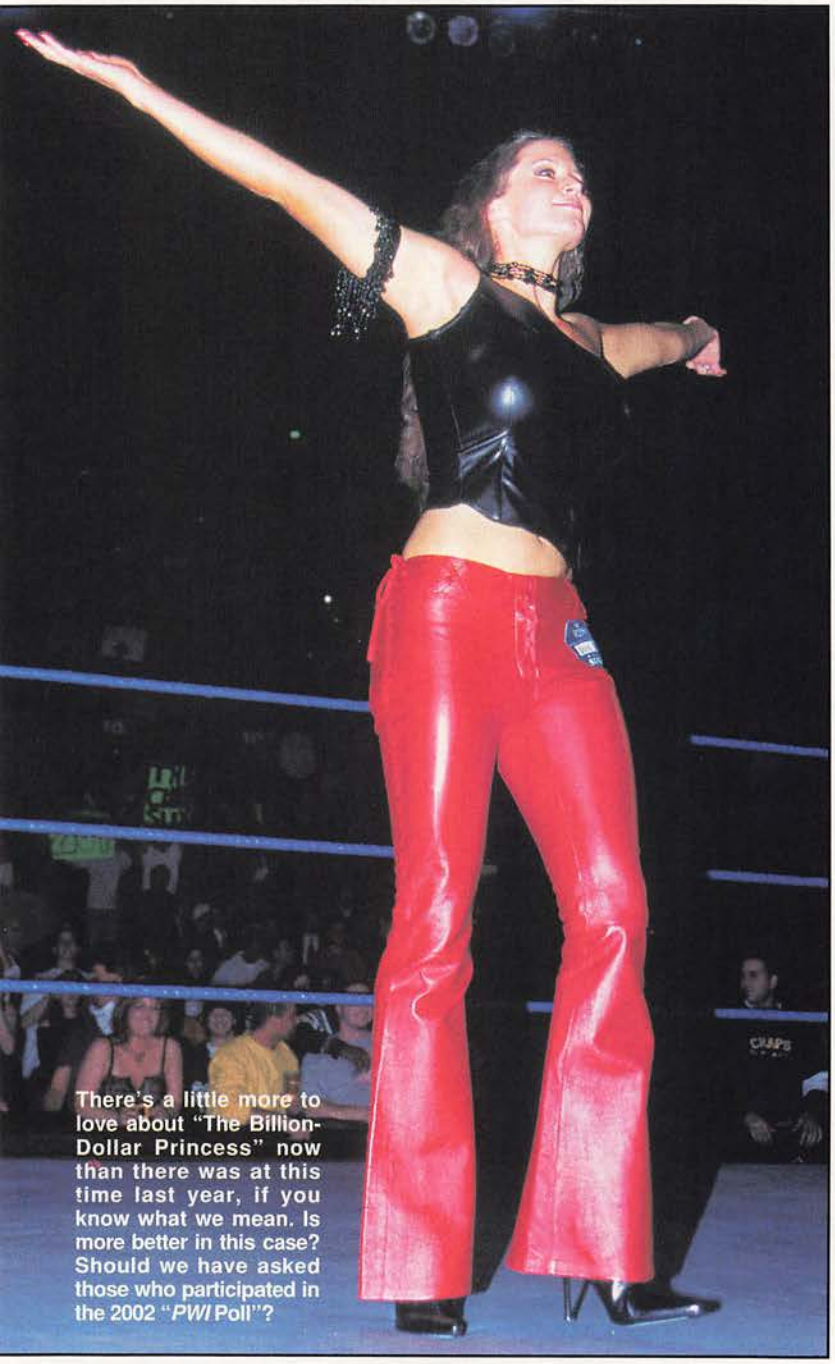
(Continued on page 64)

Evan Karagias (shown leapfrogging Chris Candido) dreamed that he'd get a shot in the WWF after the purchase of WCW was completed last March. The closest he got was a stint in the Heartland Wrestling Association, a WWF developmental territory. He was one of many former WCW undercard wrestlers recently released by the WWF.

Dan Severn was in danger of becoming fodder for *Inside Wrestling's* "Whatever Happened To ...?" column. Now the former NWA champion is again making news in the NWA. He attacked new champ Shinya Hashimoto right after he won the belt.

In focus

By Dave Lenker



There's a little more to love about "The Billion-Dollar Princess" now than there was at this time last year, if you know what we mean. Is more better in this case? Should we have asked those who participated in the 2002 "*PWI* Poll"?

THE BIZARRO "*PWI* POLL"

Having recently finalized the list of 50 questions that will comprise the 2002 "*PWI* Poll" (you can read all the results in the June 2002 issue), I can't stop thinking about it, though I wish I could. Not only am I wondering what the final results will look like once all those polled check in with their answers, I'm thinking about some of the questions I'd like to ask but really can't. These aren't the kind of questions that are at all relevant to the current state of the sport, the future of the sport, the past of the sport, or anything else that's of any real importance. Consider these 20 questions to be my tribute to former colleague Dave Rosenbaum, who in years past often reserved column space for questions he thought should have been included in the annual "*PWI* Poll." (Dave was never the politically correct type.)

By the way, anyone who wishes to actually try to answer these questions can do so and send them to: "Bizarro *PWI* Poll," c/o PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Or you can e-mail them to me at the address listed at the end of this column. These are for you, Dave, wherever you are today.

Note: The June 2002 issue of *PWI* goes on sale April 2. Trust me, you don't want to miss the real "*PWI* Poll."

1. Do you like Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley better now, or did you prefer the pre-breast enhancement version of "The Billion-Dollar Princess"? Interpret this question in whichever way you like.

2. How would you characterize the WWF's handling of the WCW/ECW invasion last year? Multiple choice on this one ... A) Poor. B) Really poor. C) Horrible. D) Really horrible. E) Hugh Morrus never got the push he deserved.

3. Which man would you rather see in the WWF today, Scott Steiner or Hulk Hogan? Multiple choice on this one, too ... A) Scott Steiner. B) Scott Steiner. C) Scott Steiner. D) Scott Steiner. E) All of the above.

4. If you could only watch one syndicated WWF show each week, which one would you choose, *Metal* or *Jakked*?

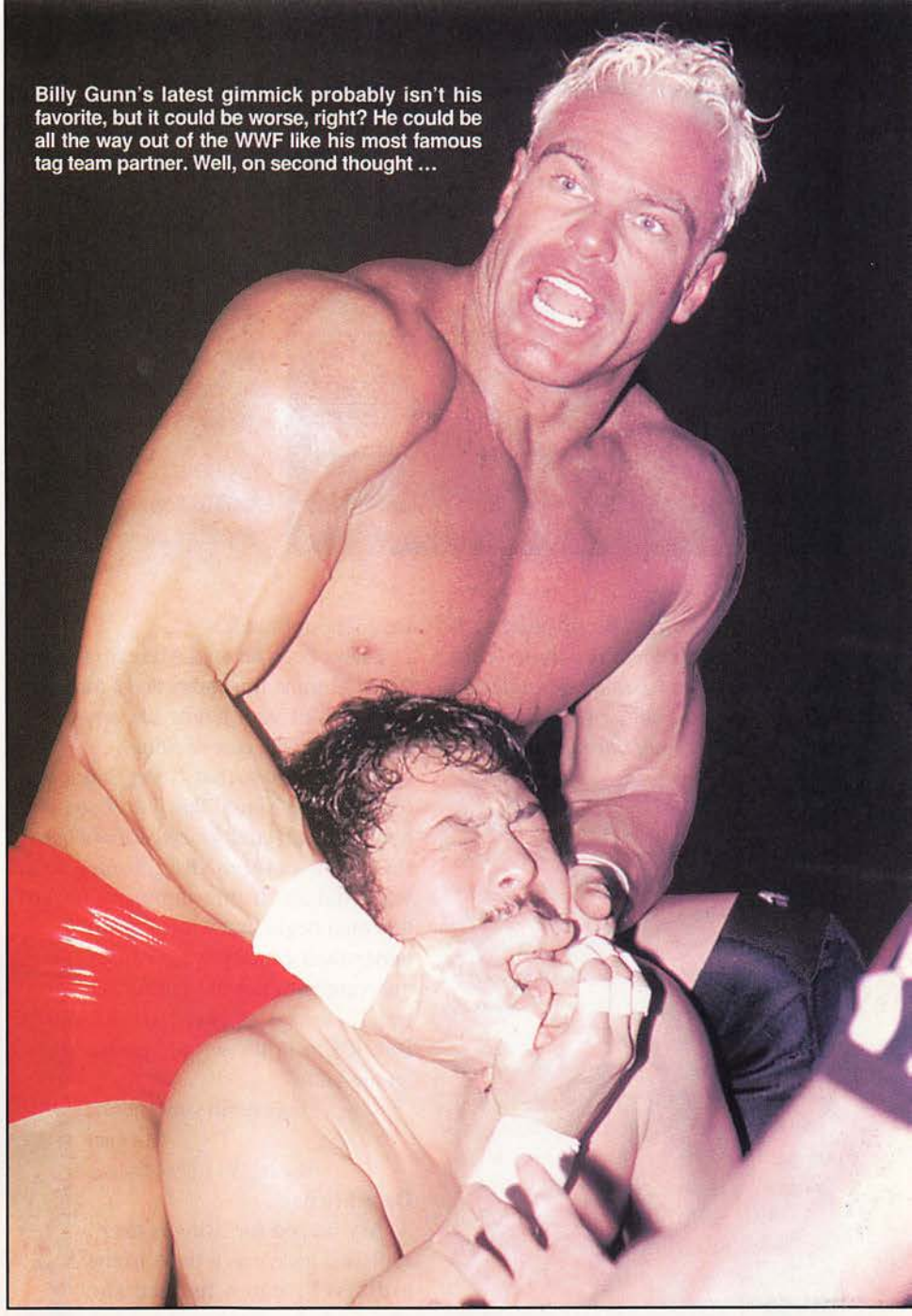
5. How many times have you watched *Metal* and *Jakked* during the last year? Only three choices for this question ... A) Once. B) More than once. C) Less than once.

6. Who is wrestling's least sexy woman?

7. Who is wrestling's least sexy man?

8. Would you judge wrestling's immediate *past* as hopeless, cloudy, status quo, promising, or shining? In case you're wondering, I'm not really sure what this one means, either.

9. Do you think we will ever see a tag team match pitting Raven and Maven against Tazz



Billy Gunn's latest gimmick probably isn't his favorite, but it could be worse, right? He could be all the way out of the WWF like his most famous tag team partner. Well, on second thought ...

and Jazz? No need to pick a winner or anything. A simple "yes" or "no" will be sufficient.

10. Which wrestler possesses the least effective finisher in all of wrestling? Special note: The spinnerooni is not recognized as an official offensive wrestling move by PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED or any of its sister publications.

11. Which wrestler throws the weakest-looking punches?

12. Which is the best middle-rope maneuver? Sorry, I can't think of any that are executed from the bottom rope.

13. Will the WWF find original ways of making Tazz look bad in 2002 or actually make an effort to try to capitalize on the popularity that (amazingly) he still has?

14. How many bad gimmicks will "Diamond" Dallas Page go through in the WWF in 2002 before he finds one that works?

15. If he could no longer be the Big Bossman, which persona would you like to see Ray Traylor use again? Gotta offer multiple choice on this one ... A) Big Bubba Rogers. B) The Boss. C) The Guardian Angel. D) Ray Traylor. E) One of the other ones, although I have to be honest, I can't remember any of the others. Special note: Keep in mind that it was John Tenta, not Traylor, who once wrestled as The Shark.

16. Which member of The New Age Outlaws, one of the hottest acts in the WWF just a few years ago, is better off professionally today, Road Dogg, who was fired and is now working for the fledgling World Wrestling All-Stars, or Billy Gunn, who is still working for the WWF, but is now part of the Chuck and Billy tag team with Chuck Palumbo? Or I suppose I could ask which Billy Gunn persona is better, the current one or Rockabilly ...

17. Which tag team would you rather see stick together over the long haul, Chuck and Billy, or Albert and Scotty Too Hotty? Special note: You *must* pick one of the two teams listed or your ballot will be disregarded completely.

18. Which former WCW wrestler do you think most wishes the company had not been sold to the WWF last March? This could be broken down into two questions, the first being reserved for wrestlers not hired by the WWF after the sale, and the second being asked of wrestlers who *were* picked up by Vince McMahon.

19. How long do you think it will take for the Steve Austin "What?!" catchphrase to go out of style? Another multiple choice offering for you ... A) Two months. B) Two to four months. C) Four to six months. D) Six months to one year. E) Longer than one year. F) What?!

20. The mention of the name in match results of what old-timer is most likely to prompt you to shake your head and say something to the effect of, "I thought he was dead!" or "What the hell is he still doing in the ring at his age?"

(Have a comment or question about "In Focus" or anything else you see in ***PWI?*** *You can contact Dave Lenker via e-mail at PWIFocus@aol.com.)* □

Off the TOP ROPE

By Brandi Mankiewicz

If you wish to contribute to Brandi's mailbag, send your letters to:

TOP ROPE
Box 1148
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Or send e-mail to:
OffTheTopRope @yahoo.com

(Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Brandi Mankiewicz herself. They do not necessarily reflect the editorial views of this magazine.)

THERE ARE TIMES when life seems so unfair. Events happen that take your breath away and make you angry at the higher power who ultimately controls our lives. As I write this, only 17 days have passed since WWF developmental wrestler Russ Haas died. It's been 17 days since the world changed again, and not for the better.

Being in the position that I am here at ***PWI****, I meet the wrestlers and am sometimes allowed into their personal lives. A lot of them hide a bit because it is what protects them as they go about their chaotic lifestyle. That was not how Russ was. He was an open book, full of life and love. He was a person who made you feel blessed to know him. And he had a devious streak that I could truly admire. Professionally, he was just like his brother, Charlie: a future superstar. He had the look, the charisma, and the ability to make it straight to the top with just a little more polishing. Life is full of irony.*

I found it quite ironic to be standing at the Memorial Oak Cemetery in Houston, Texas, paying my final respects to Russ, while on the other side of the cemetery lay my hero, Gino Hernandez, for all of eternity. Now, I try to find solace in the fact that two of my heroes are forever in Texas. Russ, you will always be my champion.

Dear Queen Brandi,

I have been an avid admirer of yours for quite some time now, and I must say that some of your points are very valid, especially in the case of Sting.

Now I know that Sting has been retired since March, but I still see you trash him on many occasions when I read your column. But, I must ask, when did all of this animosity toward this man begin and why? I don't understand exactly what causes this venom to run in your blood, but I guess I'm just curious. But, if I'm in the wrong, please let me know.

Forever in your mercy,
Michael
Rush__911@webtv.net

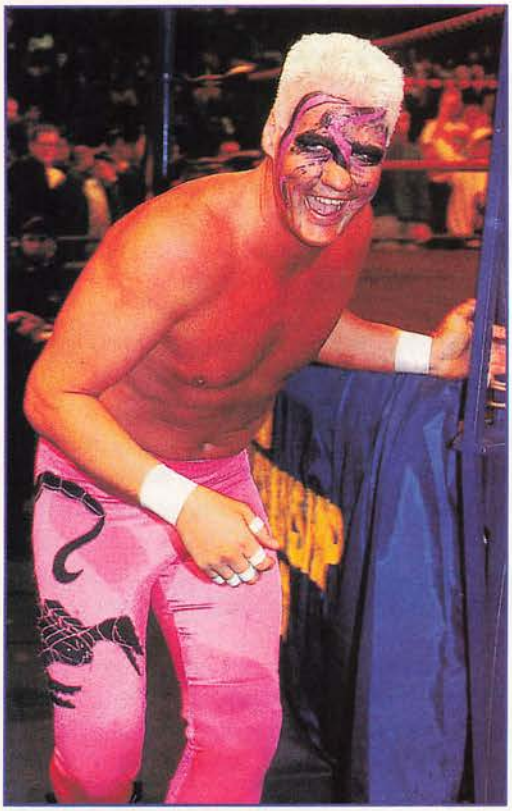
Dear Michael,

My hatred for Sting is deep-rooted. There was a time, in the old UWF, when he had the chance to be mentored by one of the greatest rulebreakers in wrestling history, Eddie Gilbert, and ascend to the role of King Rulebreaker when Eddie was ready to relinquish that title. Sting was squarely on the darker path to glory, but Sting gave up that chance at infamy for a UWF tag team title belt and the fans. Sure, he went on to have a pretty nifty little career for himself, but I will never forget his betrayal of his original fate. I firmly believe it was his inability to accept his darker destiny that made him kiss so much fan butt during his career. Sting was a one-dimensional character to me, and I believe that if he would have remained as a heel, he would have been much more successful. As his career stands now, Barry Windham was a better Sting than Steve Borden ever was.

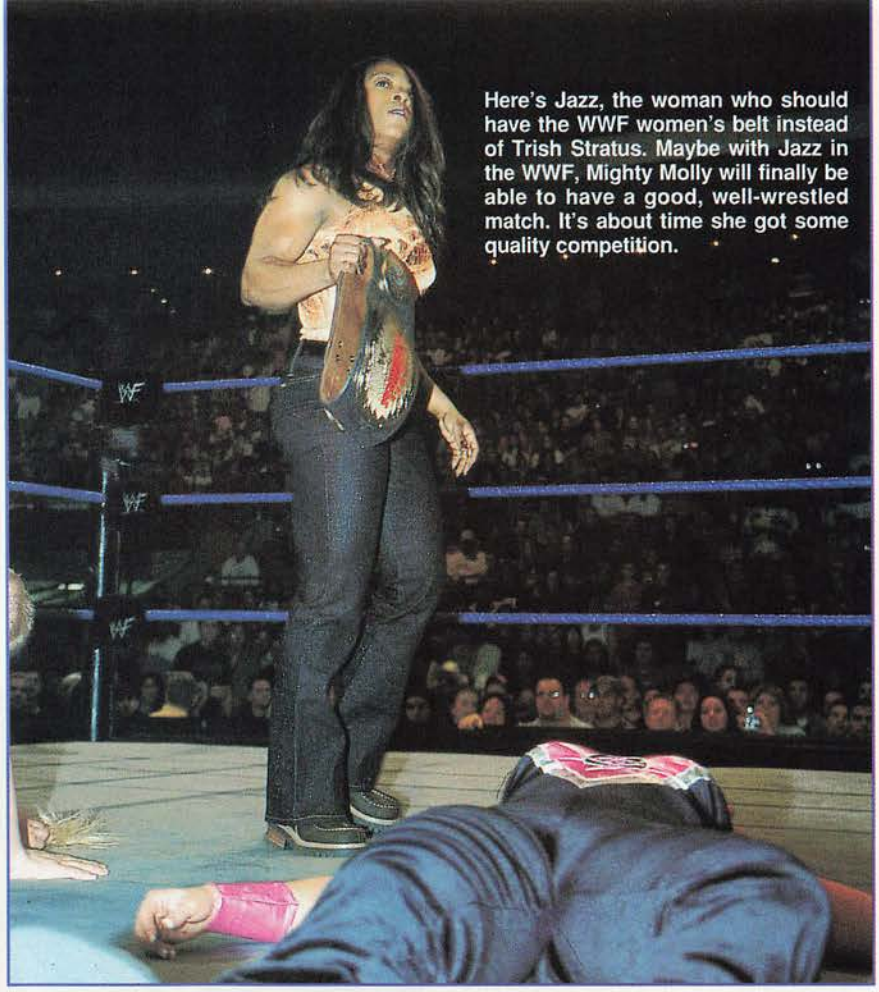
Your Majesty,

I would like to ask you where do you see wrestling going in 2002. A lot has happened in 2001 that may be difficult to top. I think pro wrestling may see a decline in popularity. Do you feel it will be tough for the WWF to keep the fans interested in pro wrestling in 2002 and beyond? I would like to say in closing that I see some of the letters that grace your column and wonder just how many aspirin you have to take at night, so if you ever need a vacation, I would like to volunteer to take over for a month or so. As always, you are my champion.

Your loyal subject,
ROBERT SCHUSCHU
schubag28@hotmail.com



This is the only Sting that matters to me. Unfortunately for Steve Borden, it's the Barry Windham version. It's too bad that Borden turned his back on Eddie Gilbert years ago. He could have been such a great heel.



Here's Jazz, the woman who should have the WWF women's belt instead of Trish Stratus. Maybe with Jazz in the WWF, Mighty Molly will finally be able to have a good, well-wrestled match. It's about time she got some quality competition.

Dear Schu-Licker,

Wrestling is a cyclical business, and we are fast approaching the lowest level of the past several years. It's hard to say just how far we will fall before things start to turn upward. This time, there are fewer players on the scene, and many of those who remain now are on the verge of closing down. I predict that many of the smaller independent promotions will not last to see 2003. I also believe that more than a handful of talented, young veteran indy wrestlers will get out of wrestling. Don't worry, though, the wrestling scene shakes itself out like this every few years or so. I do think that wrestling will survive; it will just have mostly new faces by the dawn of the next year.

As for the psycho mail that I get, I see your e-mail address more than any other freak who writes to me. Yes, I do need a healthy dose of margaritas to make me forget your letters. As for you wanting to be a queen for a month (albeit a much different queen than yours truly, the queen of all evil), you can do that on your own without trying to hijack my column. Try buying some size 12 pumps and singing Liza Minnelli songs.

Dear Brandi,

Why can't Vince McMahon have a women's division and focus on the up-and-coming ladies in the indies to challenge Lita? Lita is the only woman in the WWF who has, in my opinion, real wrestling skills. I sure miss the real lady rasslers such as Fabulous Moolah, Velvet McIntyre, Ann Casey, Vicki Williams, Joyce Grable, and the other vixens in the '60s, '70s, and '80s. Did you ever wrestle in boots or barefoot?

TOM YOCKEY JR.
St. Charles, MO

Dear scary guy,

In case you haven't noticed, the WWF has a women's division. Sure, the champion doesn't have as many skills as some of the women who have worn that belt before her, but at least it's a start. I do disagree with you about Lita, though. I think Mighty Molly has just as much talent, if not more. I've seen her in action throughout her career, and she has more ability than she's been allowed to show against her much weaker competition. Molly will finally have a good chance to show her arsenal now that Jazz has debuted. Jazz will definitely force all of the women to prove their worth. She's the future of the WWF. Oh, and just because you asked, I have never wrestled and I have no idea where your sick little mind got that notion.

Letter of the month (taken verbatim from the actual letter to share my torture with you all):

DEAR BEAUTiFUL BRANdi,

I HAVE A dREAM TAG TEAM.

STONE COLD STEVE AUSTiN ANd BiLL GOLdBERG AS A TAG TEAM.

THEY CAN BEAT EVERY TAG TEAM CHAMPiONS THRU OUT THE WORLd.

STONE COLd STEVE AUSTiN ANd BiLL GOLdBERG THE PEOPLE TAG TEAM CHAMPiONS.

STONE COLd STEVE AUSTiN ANd BiLL GOLdBERG AS TAG TEAM CHAMPiONS.

PUT THEiR TAG TEAM CHAMPiONSHiP ON THE LiNE.

UNdER HARd CORE RULES.

STONE COLd STEVE AUSTiN AND BiLL GOLdBERG THE GREATEST SiNCE THE CRUSHER AND DiCK THE BRUiSER TAG TEAM.

JOE E. LONGSTREET III
MiNNEAPOLiS, MN

DEAR JOE,

The only thing scarier than your notion that Steve Austin and Bill Goldberg would be a good tag team is that it took you took two legal-sized pieces of paper to write this letter to me. Here's a hint: If you look at a sheet of plain, ruled paper—either college or standard rule—you'll see a bunch of little colored lines running horizontally across the page when you are holding it correctly. In theory, you are supposed to write words on each of those lines, not skip two or three lines between sentences. Needless to say, I don't want to know if you licked the stamps. I really don't want to think that any of your bodily fluids, dried or otherwise, are near me at this moment. □

KREW-CUTS

By Frank Krewda

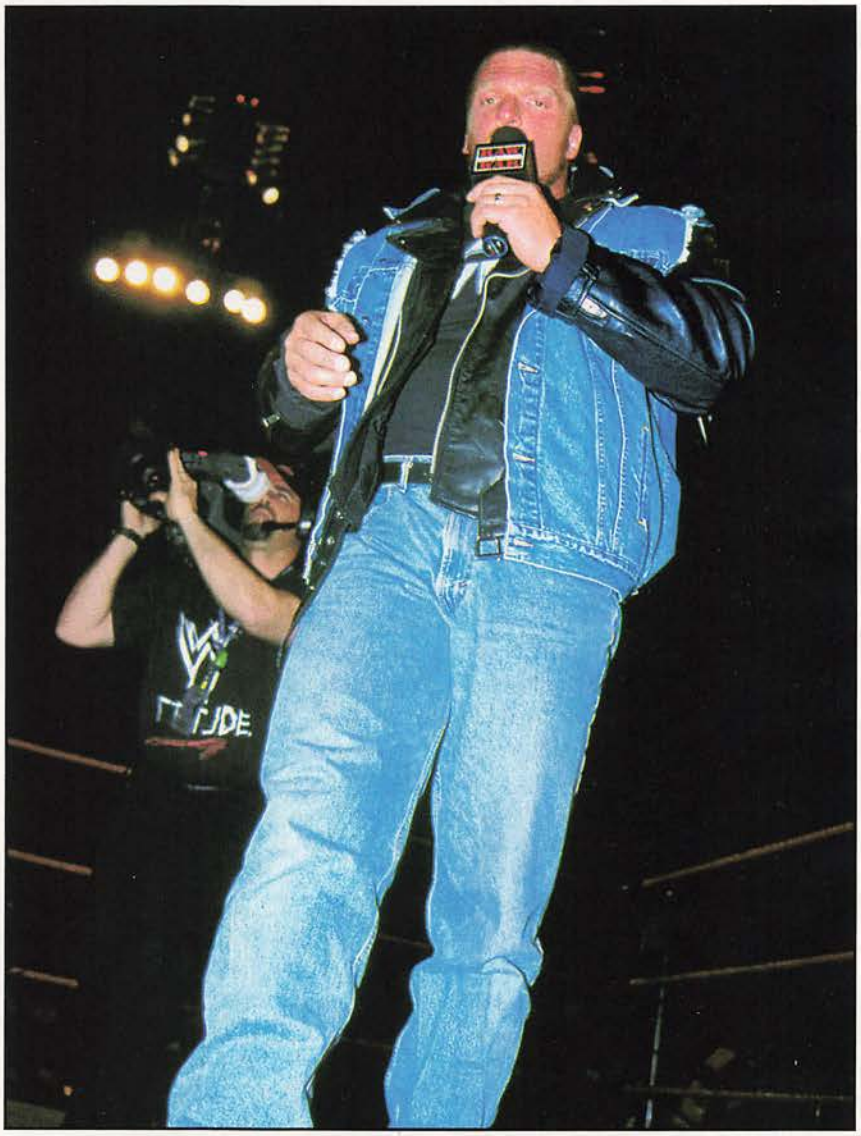
Rantings and ravings. Some general observations concerning the world of wrestling ... If you're like me, you're still waiting for the fallout from Triple-H's return on January 7. After eight months of hype, the last thing I wanted to see from HHH and the WWF was more hype. Of course, that's exactly what the final 15 minutes of *Raw* that night consisted of. But instead of calling for Vince's head, I'm calling for WWF fans to exercise a little patience (as if they have a choice).

Sure, we were expecting Triple-H to explode into some hot, meaningful storyline right away and assume his rightful place atop the WWF roster. However, I think there's something more interesting at work here. Remember, Vince kicked off the show by declaring that he had an announcement that was more important than Hunter's return. Kurt Angle, too, tried to overshadow Helmsley's return by announcing that he would be entering the Royal Rumble. The windup: Fate is toying with Triple-H once again, just like it did when he first ascended to the top of the sport two-plus years ago. It's the perfect scenario for "The Game-uh" to launch a heel turn. And when Triple-H is playing the heel, he is indeed the best player in the game. Remember, patience, people, patience.

I suppose it's poor manners to bust out laughing when somebody dies, but truth be told, Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker and I laughed long and hard when we heard Ed Whalen, the legendary announcer of Stampede Wrestling and Calgary Flames (NHL) renown, had died.

No, of course we didn't laugh out of disrespect to Whalen, who was very good at what he did and who meant a whole lot to a whole lot of people up north. It's just that neither Dave nor me is capable of keeping a straight face whenever Whalen's name comes up. That's because Whalen happens to be the protagonist of wrestling's strangest and (at least we think) funniest inside story.

Whalen had some very definite views about how pro wrestling should be portrayed on TV. He was not into gratuitous violence and excessive bloodshed. Abdullah the Butcher, who was trying to make a name for himself in the territory at the time, was quite



The return of Triple-H to the WWF on January 7 made for a very emotionally charged night at Madison Square Garden, although some, including Frank Krewda, found it underwhelming since he didn't do much of note. Krewda suggests it might have been the subtle beginning of another heel turn for "The Game."

violent and shed buckets of blood. Abby, of course, was (and still is) unpredictable in the ring. Whalen, though, was every bit as stubborn as Abby was unpredictable. If he didn't like the way a segment was coming together, he simply ended it or acted as if it wasn't happening.

Except on one occasion, when Abdullah was feeling especially violent, Whalen got so agitated, he went upside Abby's craggy scalp with the microphone in full earnest! Abdullah quickly retaliated, but luckily for Whalen (and for Abby, who no doubt would have been arrested for murder), Stu Hart was on hand to break up the melee. Abby went on to become the Abby we all know and love. Whalen, meanwhile, spent the next few years looking over both shoulders—that was, until he and Abdullah reconciled. The only thing I've ever witnessed even close to an announcer doing something that outrageous was the night I saw a ringside photographer break down and cry as Tommy Dreamer gave his victory speech after beating Tazz for the ECW World title at "Cyberslam 2000."

What is it with Perry Saturn and preliminary opponents? He got into trouble last spring for getting a bit too rough with this man, Mike Bell. And just a few months ago, a guy named Brian Gamble gave him some problems, though Saturn didn't get into trouble for that incident.

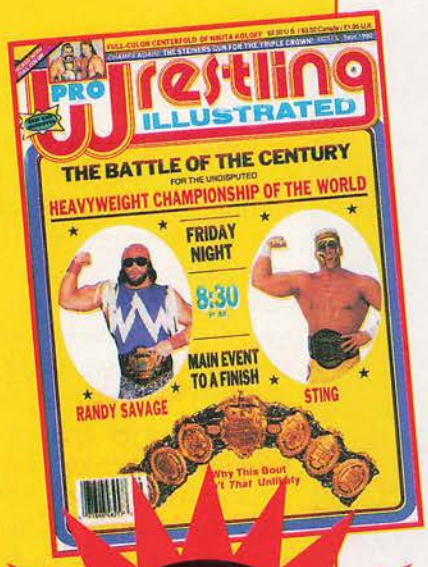
Hey, does anybody out there know who Brian Gamble is? If you said the second preliminary wrestler Perry Saturn nearly stretched in the ring in 2001, congratulations. Last May, Saturn got himself into trouble when he lost his cool against Mike Bell when he wasn't happy with how the match was going (obviously believing Bell was to blame). Fortunately for both men, Bell wasn't seriously injured in the incident, and Saturn was able to retain his job (though he was sent home after it happened). Gamble, it seems, lucked out, too.

Apparently, the match was going smoothly, with Saturn, predictably, getting in a lot more offense than his no-name opponent. But since Gamble had family and friends in the Lafayette, Louisiana, crowd, he didn't want to look bad, which is usually what happens when you're a preliminary guy wrestling in a match taped for *Jakked* or *Metal*. Soon, things got pretty ugly. Since Saturn is legitimately a very tough man, he was able to put a little extra into some of his holds and really *force* Gamble to tap out in what was an awkward situation.

But really, not only is Gamble fortunate that Saturn didn't spread him around the ring like butter, he should thank his lucky stars the WWF didn't give him the treatment it reserved for Jim Ross the last time the WWF pulled into Oklahoma.

Triple-H, Undertaker, and Chris Jericho are always chirping about respect as part of their storylines. It seems Saturn might have to send a message about respect to some of the in-coming talent. However, I don't think Mr. Gamble will be getting a call the next time the WWF comes to Louisiana ... By the way, I'm as tolerant as the next guy, but are we supposed to go for Billy Gunn and Chuck Palumbo now that they're "together"? These guys couldn't draw flies at the dump before they met and "fell in love" ... Speaking of doomed angles, is there a faster way to kill any heat Jazz might have had than to have her run in on Trish Stratus during a wet-T-shirt contest like she did at *Raw* on January 7? ... In a rare display of fairness to the WWF, though, I must admit, the creative team in Stamford has improved a lot in the last few months, especially compared to some of the stuff they were churning out in the middle of 2001. In one recent skit, when Booker T asked Kane for some advice prior to his first-blood match against Steve Austin on *Smackdown,* Kane deadpanned, "Don't bleed." Eat your heart out, Rod Serling.

Now for an editorial note: Two months ago, Publisher Stu Saks suggested that by writing a scathing column about Bill Goldberg in this space, I was indirectly admitting that I considered "Da Blowhard" to still be newsworthy (even though I'd written approximately 1,000 words to the contrary). Follow that line of thinking and you can only surmise that Stu finds me newsworthy. After all, I got almost as much ink in Saks' column as Goldberg got in mine. □



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February 1992: Has Hulk Hogan Had Enough? Centerfold: 1992 calendar. Plus: Sting, Justice-Roberts, hot prospects, Eddie Gilbert.

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February 1993: No One Can Cut Down Razor Ramon. Centerfold: Curt Hennig. Plus: Jake Roberts, Pillman-Dustin, Ric Flair-Road Warriors, Rick Rude, Snuka-Muraco.

May 1993: WrestleMania Without Hulk Hogan? Centerfold: The Undertaker. Plus: Ron Simmons, Cactus Jack, Madusa-Sherri, WCW-New Japan, Ultimate Warrior.

April 1996: WCW World Title Turmoil. Centerfold: The Kid. Plus: Hulk Hogan, Ahmed Johnson, Bob Armstrong, Michaels-Bret, Public Enemy.

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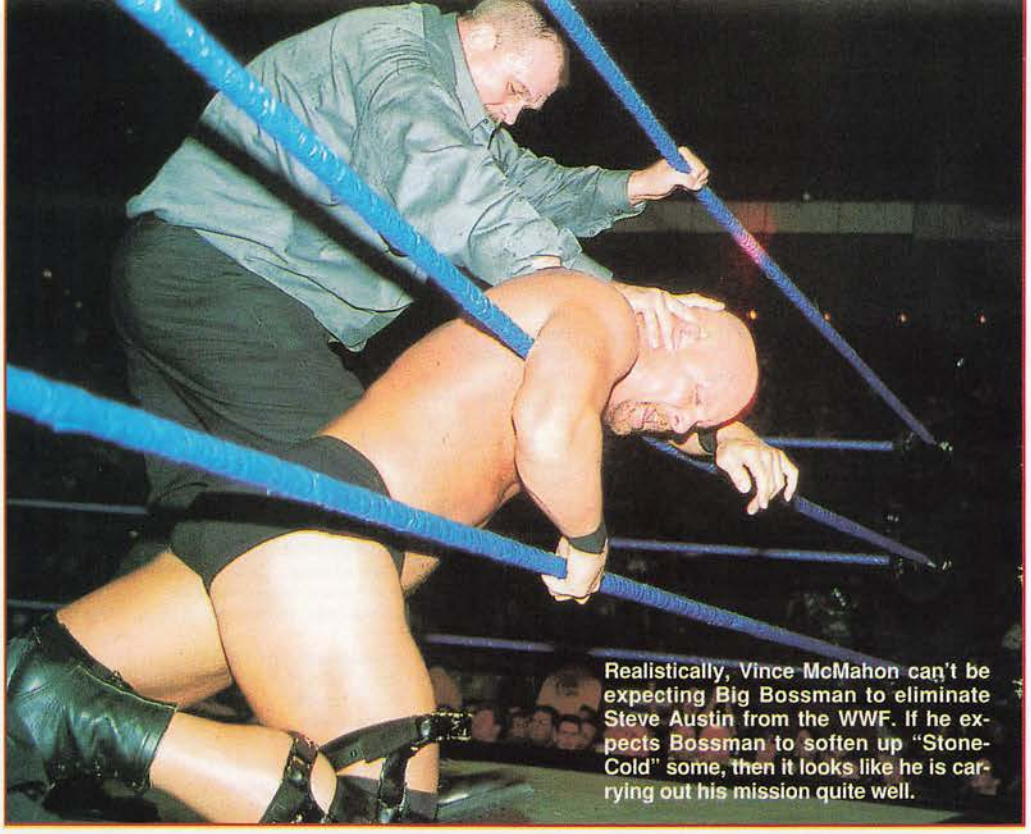


Realistically, Vince McMahon can't be expecting Big Bossman to eliminate Steve Austin from the WWF. If he expects Bossman to soften up "Stone-Cold" some, then it looks like he is carrying out his mission quite well.

BIG BOSSMAN

IT'S A KNOWN fact that Vince McMahon prizes loyalty above all other virtues, and Big Bossman has been one of McMahon's most loyal foot soldiers.

The former lawman from Cobb County, Georgia, first appeared in the WWF in 1988 and became a top contender to Hulk Hogan's WWF title. After failing in his quest to win the championship and having a falling-out with manager Slick, Bossman joined forces with Hogan and became a fan favorite. He remained in the WWF until 1993, when he moved on to WCW. The Bossman went through a series of identities during his stint in WCW. He was both The Boss and The Guardian Angel, a persona patterned after the vigilante group of the same name. As Guardian Angel, his biggest feud was with Vader. Then he was Big Bubba Rogers, his original moniker from his rookie year, and feuded with Sting and The Giant. Finally, as Ray Traylor (his real name), he was recruited into the New World Order, though he failed to break out of the mid-card ranks.

A leaner, slightly meaner and wiser Bossman returned to the WWF in 1998, aligning himself with McMahon's Corporation. In that year, he won his first of four WWF hardcore titles with a triumph over Mankind. Bossman feuded with Al Snow and The Undertaker and took both Albert and Bull Buchanan as his protégés, though both ended up breaking away from him. In late-1999, he again broke through to main events, challenging then-WWF champion The Big Show (formerly The Giant) for the belt at Armageddon. But Bossman failed to wrest the belt away from TBS and slid back into the mid-card. By the time he vanished in mid-2000, only the most ardent Bossman fans noticed.

Bossman made all the fans remember his name on December 18, when he returned to the Federation and interfered to allow Booker T to defeat Steve Austin in a first-blood match at ***Smackdown.*** *Bossman is back in McMahon's service, and he promises to make live miserable for the likes of Austin and The Rock. Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker, Managing Editor Brandi Mankiewicz, and Senior Writer Dan Murphy met with Bossman in an attempt to find out where he's been and about his plans for the future.*

DAVE LENKER: Well, Bossman, I guess we should start by saying welcome back. Where have you been for the past year or so? Vacationing with Amelia Earhart?

BRANDI MANKIEWICZ: Or lying low and praying that The Big Show forgets all those things you said about his father?

BIG BOSSMAN: Pretty lady, I could give a damn about The Big Show and his dead daddy. If I said the word, Mr. McMahon would send that big ugly S.O.B. right back out of the WWF, maybe for good this time. As for what I've been up to, I took a little time off to rest up some injuries that have been bothering me. Remember, I was wrestling hardcore matches for quite a while there. You can only do that so long before your body starts to give out on you. While I was off, I stayed in touch with Mr. McMahon pretty regularly. In fact, I helped train him for his match against Shane at WrestleMania. I've been ready to come back for months, but Mr. McMahon told me to wait. He said the time would come when he needed me. And that time is now.

DAN MURPHY: Are you back in the role of Vince's official bodyguard again?

BOSSMAN: Let's just say I've been hired to punish the people that need to be punished. See, a lot of people have been trying to push Mr. McMahon and his associates around lately. That's just not a good idea. Right now, my job is to make Steve Austin pay for disrespecting Mr. McMahon and Booker T. I'm gonna teach "Stone-Cold" a lesson about respecting the man who made him what he is today.

LENKER: Does your return have anything to do with the stinkface Rikishi gave Vince a few weeks after Survivor Series?

BOSSMAN: Let me put it to you this way. With me around, Mr. McMahon won't have to worry about anything like that happening again. And Rikishi *will* have to pay the price for what he's done.

MANKIEWICZ: Great. Nothing can lift the ratings like a Bossman-Rikishi feud.

"I know how Austin works and what makes him tick. Mr. McMahon and I have figured out together, along with Booker T, what it will take to bring Austin to his knees. Maybe the Vince McMahon Kiss My Ass club is closed, but I can make Austin bow down and kiss Mr. McMahon's feet."

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

Wake me when it's over.

BOSSMAN: My job isn't to make you happy, woman.

MANKIEWICZ: You certainly don't have to worry about that. Why start now?

MURPHY: Okay, let's stop this before this interview gets nasty. Bossman, what do you see yourself accomplishing now that you're back? Do you have any goals, or are you just here to do whatever McMahon orders you to do?

BOSSMAN: ***(still glaring at Mankiewicz)*** **Your little girlfriend here had better learn to watch her mouth. I can have her thrown out of here.**

MANKIEWICZ: Really? For God's sake, you can't even grasp the concept of wearing wrestling gear to the ring! Not too long ago, I saw you and Booker T wrestle Austin in a handicap match, and you were wearing a suit. Doesn't McMahon pay you enough to wear tights? Not since Killer Brooks have I seen a sweatier wrestler than you.

Bossman can be hardcore when he needs to be. Remember, he was he first man to win the WWF hardcore title in an actual match (original champ Mankind was awarded the belt). He notes that one reason he disappeared for a while was to heal some nagging injuries he suffered in hardcore warfare.

LENKER: Okay, I think that's enough, Brandi. Bossman, I believe Dan asked a valid question.

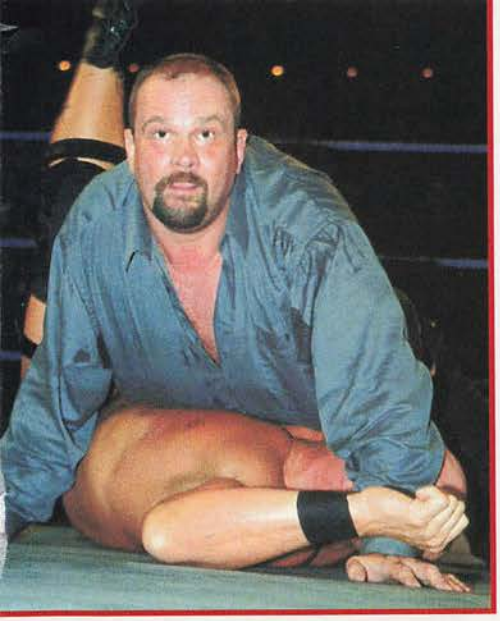
BOSSMAN: Right now, my only goal is to knock Austin down a peg. And that night you're talking about, well, on that night, I decided to show Austin exactly who he's messing with. I don't need to change into my wrestling gear to send that man a message. He ain't worth the trouble. As for me, right now, Chris Jericho is Mr. McMahon's chosen WWF champion. Anyone who wants Jericho is more than likely going to have to go through me. And that's a lot easier said than done. As for personal goals, I just might like another shot at The Undertaker someday. I still have a score to settle with him from our "Hell In A Cell" match a few years back. But right now, we're both on Mr. McMahon's side, so that little grudge is gonna have to wait. And as for you, little girl, I bet the thought of me getting hot and sweaty keeps you awake at night.

MANKIEWICZ: If you mean shivering in a cold sweat and hugging my toilet bowl between outbreaks of vomiting, I guess you're right.

LENKER: How is your conditioning these days, Bossman? You've been off for a long time. Before you left, you were competing in a number of tag team matches. Just recently, you and Booker T beat Austin in the handicap match that Brandi referred to. You also mentioned some nagging injuries. As a 15-year veteran, does the Big Bossman still have enough gas in the tank to go the distance with the likes of Austin and The Rock?

BOSSMAN: I haven't spent the past year sitting on my butt and eating Ring Dings. I've been working out every day. I've been doing a lot of time on the treadmill and the rowing machine. My cardiovascular conditioning is as good as it's ever been. I'm at 150 percent, and I'm ready to take down anyone in the WWF who gets out of line.

MURPHY: We heard this same kind of talk a few years ago, when you guys were all part of McMahon's Corporation, which basically existed as a means to bring down Austin. That didn't work, and it fell apart. What makes you think this will be any different?



Everything old is new again. When the McMahon-Austin war started more than four years ago, it was Bossman (in an odd disguise) who watched the boss' back (opposite page). Now that McMahon vs. Austin is on again, the big guy from Cobb County, Georgia, is pounding on "Stone-Cold" again (above).

BOSSMAN: Mr. McMahon is a lot smarter now than he was three or four years ago. He's learned what he's dealing with in Austin. They spent some time on the same side last year. He knows how Austin works now. I know how Austin works and what makes him tick. Mr. McMahon and I have figured out together, along with Booker T, what it will take to bring Austin to his knees. Maybe the Vince McMahon Kiss My Ass club is closed, but I can make Austin bow down and kiss Mr. McMahon's feet.

MANKIEWICZ: You said anyone who wants to wrestle Jericho has to go through you. That makes you a spoiler for Jericho and McMahon. Answer me this: What if you somehow do your job and manage to beat Austin, The Rock, and every other wannabe contender? Do you expect Jericho to grant you a title shot? Or what if you don't do your job, and you lose to guys like Rock and Austin? Then McMahon fires you and you're nowhere. It looks to me like you're in a no-win situation.

BOSSMAN: You don't know what you're talking about.

MANKIEWICZ: Did I speak too quickly? Use too many syllables? What did you not understand?

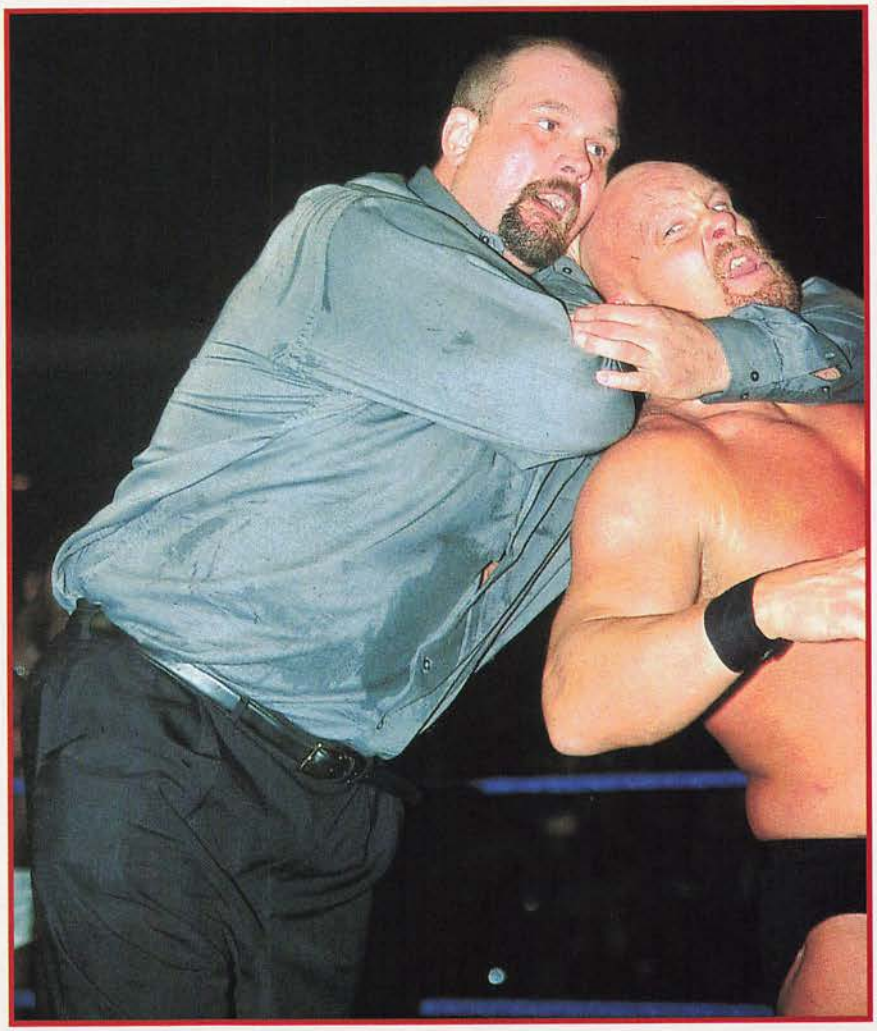
BOSSMAN: My job isn't to *beat* anyone. My job is to hurt people. People have been trying to walk all over Mr. McMahon for far too long. Mr. McMahon didn't become the most powerful man in wrestling by making stupid business decisions. He has made me a very wealthy man and he's given me a simple mission. I hurt the people he wants me to hurt. I may not have won every match I've ever wrestled, but you can be damn sure I hurt every man—or woman—I've ever tried to hurt.

MURPHY: You and Booker T have made a pretty effective tag team. Any chance of the two of you teaming on a regular basis?

BOSSMAN: I wouldn't rule it out. Booker is probably the finest tag team wrestler in the business today, and it would be a pleasure to team with him more often. If the opportunity for us to win the tag title arises, I'm sure we'll take it. Right now, my only concern is to do what Mr. McMahon paid me to do—to take out the trash here in the WWF. First victim will be Austin. Then Rikishi. Then The Rock. I'm ready to take on the world, baby.

MANKIEWICZ: Then The Undertaker and maybe the Dudleys in your spare time, eh? Good luck, Bossman. You're going to need all you can get.

BOSSMAN: Keep your luck to yourself, little lady. I've got Mr. McMahon in my corner. That's all a man like me needs. □

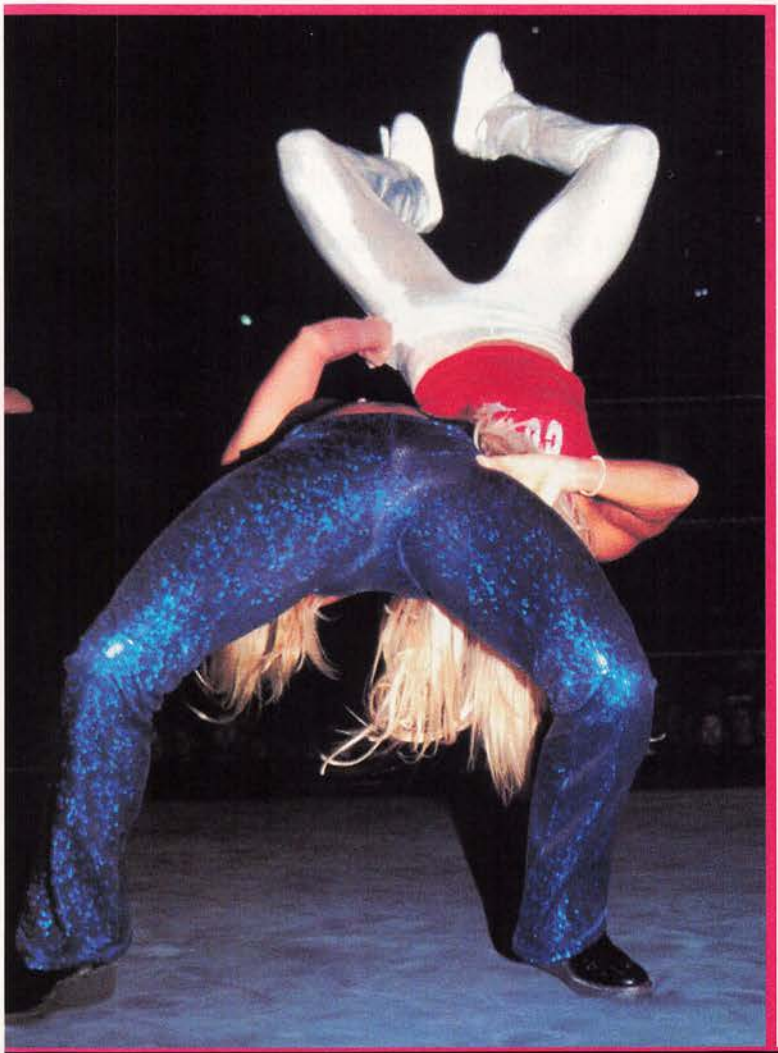


Bossman has never shied away from talking tough and issuing a lot of threats. He's considering Austin to be just one of many victims he will claim in the ensuing months. He expects to take out Rock, Rikishi, and maybe even The Undertaker if McMahon gives the order. Those are very bold plans.

WOMEN'S

TRISH STRATUS:

HER BITE IS BIGGER THAN HER BARK



By Frank Krewda

WHEN THE BRITISH band Madness formed back in 1978, it consisted of six talented musicians and one virtually useless character named Chas Smash. Untrained on any musical instrument, Smash stuck with the band by virtue of his quirky onstage antics and eccentric dancing. In short, Smash's bandmates carried him because he added an element of fun to their live performances.

Five years later, however, Smash was playing trumpet and guitar on many songs, and had written the tune "Our House," the most commercially successful of the band's 24 singles. By the time Madness disbanded in 1986, the music media considered Smash to be the group's leader.

Similar quests for respectability are taking place in offices, musical groups, and professional wrestling rings every day. Some of the more memorable success stories include Justin

A snap suplex isn't the most difficult wrestling move to execute, but a year or two ago, Trish wasn't capable of a lot more than hair-pulling. She's come a long way in a fairly short period of time, and it's no joke that she became the women's champion.

There's a reason you don't see Trish in the ring against Torrie Wilson much anymore. Torrie competes almost exclusively in gimmick matches in which very little actual wrestling is required of her. Stratus has progressed beyond that level. She's prepared for opponents with real in-ring skills, even Jazz.

Credible, who shed his laughable Aldo Montoya character to become the ECW World champion.

And there's Bob Holly, who graduated from Sparky Plugg to Hardcore Holly, a two-time hardcore champion. Then there's Rikishi, who struggled through one unsuccessful gimmick after another (remember The Sultan?) until he finally caught on in a huge way in the late-'90s and won an Intercontinental title to boot.

Well, you can add Trish Stratus' name to the list of WWF performers who have gone from stumble bum to champion. Like the wrestlers named above, Trish filled a number of ancillary roles in the WWF, but until Survivor Series 2001, champion was never one of them.

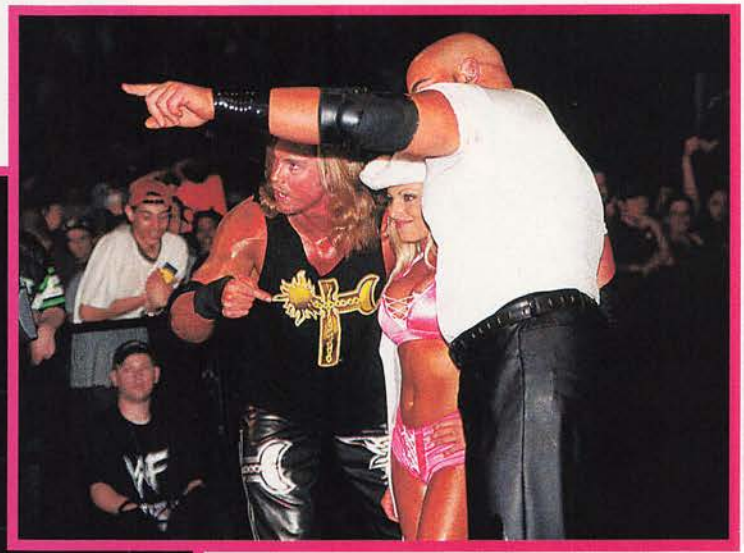
That was the night she outwitted, outlasted, and, yes, outwrestled five other ladies to win the vacant WWF women's title. Now it seems WWF fans and performers have gone from snickering and leering at the buxom blonde to showing her the respect her recent in-ring successes have earned her.

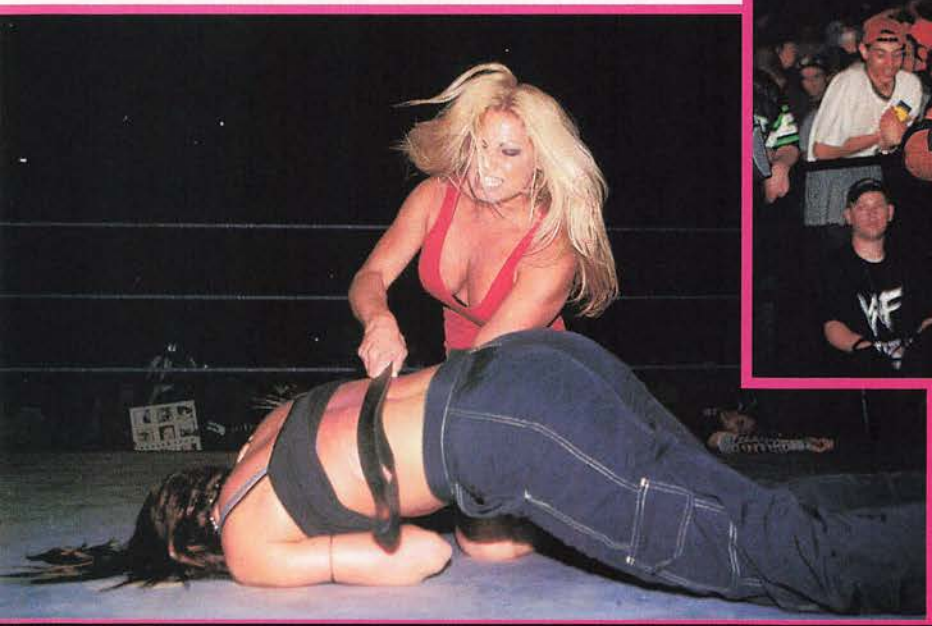
"The transformation is stunning," said Lita, who has wrestled both with and against Trish at various points of her career. "I'll admit it. I thought Trish was all T & A for the longest time, but she's the champ now, and that says a lot. I didn't like the way Trish carried herself sometimes, but I never thought I'd have to compete against her one day. It's unreal."

Actually, Trish's recent title victory shouldn't come as a major surprise to her fans. Since she broke into the WWF, Stratus has surrounded herself with talented wrestlers who were eager to share their skills.

Among the notables Trish has studied under: Triple-H, The Rock, Test, Albert, Val Venis, Kurt Angle, and Lita. In hindsight, it seems obvious Trish was doing more than just providing some of her counterparts with a little Stratus-faction behind closed doors.

"I guess she was making plans to win the women's





It wasn't long ago that the only way Trish could do well against Lita was to launch sneak-attacks and whip her when she was down (left). Back then, she knew she could hide behind the wrestlers she managed, namely Test and Albert (above), as soon as she ran into a hint of trouble. Now she faces challenges head-on.

"When Trish Status first came to the WWF, she turned heads because of the way she looked. Now, with a few years of experience under her (championship) belt, she's turning heads for showing up her boss, winning matches, and capturing gold. That's some change!"

title," laughed Jim Ross. "Sweet little Trish Stratus. While everyone was talking about her, Trish was out there getting her act together. Now she's a champion and nobody's talking down to her. Looks like Trish commands the respect now."

So exactly how did Trish manage to capture the WWF women's championship right from under her co-workers' noses?

"For one, I spent a lot of time talking to and watching the right people," Trish laughed. "And I spent a lot of time getting thrown around the ring. But I was very lucky. Some of the wrestlers I managed were very generous with their time, though others weren't quite so nice. But that's okay, because I still learned a lot from all of them."

However, the most important person in Trish's career remains Vince McMahon—hands down. "I swore after the night he humiliated me in front of the whole world that I'd never let anyone make a fool of me like that again," she said. "I hope he enjoyed himself that night, because he's going to spend the rest of his life paying for what he did to me."

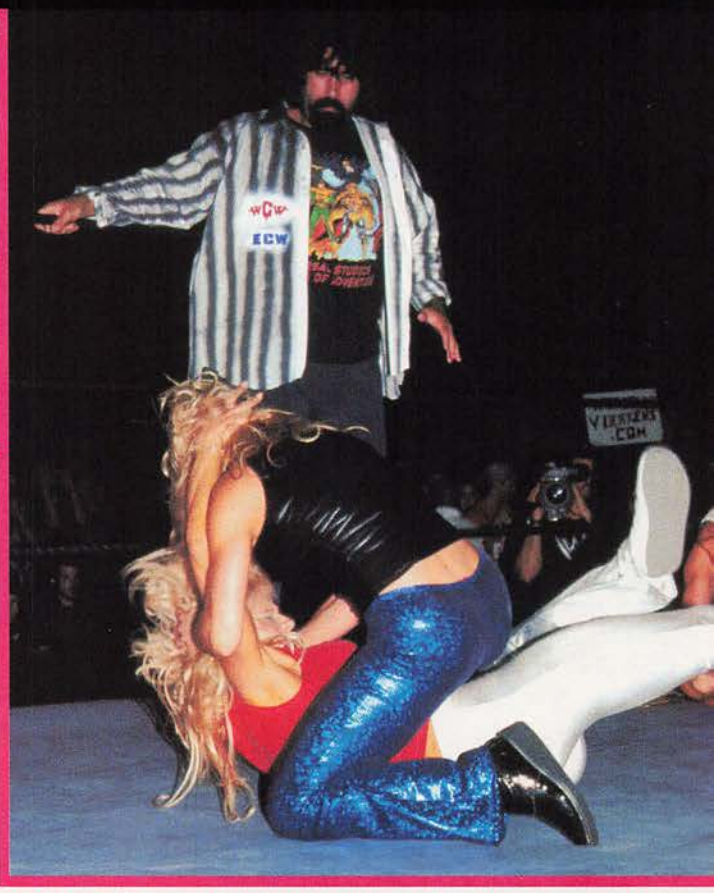
A year ago, odds are Trish would have forgiven Vince McMahon. But those days are long gone. When Trish Status first came to the WWF, she turned heads because of the way she looked. Now, with a few years of experience under her (championship) belt, she's turning heads for showing up her boss, winning matches, and capturing gold. That's some change!

Of course, Trish isn't exactly Mildred Burke quite yet, but in today's WWF women's division, she hardly needs to be. And she's happy with what she's accomplished. "I don't have to hold this title for five years or a dozen times," she said. "Being champion is enough, and getting the respect I deserve is enough. That's what it's all about, isn't it?"

If Trish is actually naive enough to believe her co-workers are about to shower her with praise just because she won a title, Fabulous Moolah, who's won a title or two, will gladly lend a touch of realism to the situation.

"I was out there fighting matches when this kid was still drawing on the milkbag," Moolah laughed. "The only person impressed with ya is yourself. Trish Stratus? I forgot more than she'll ever know about wrestling."

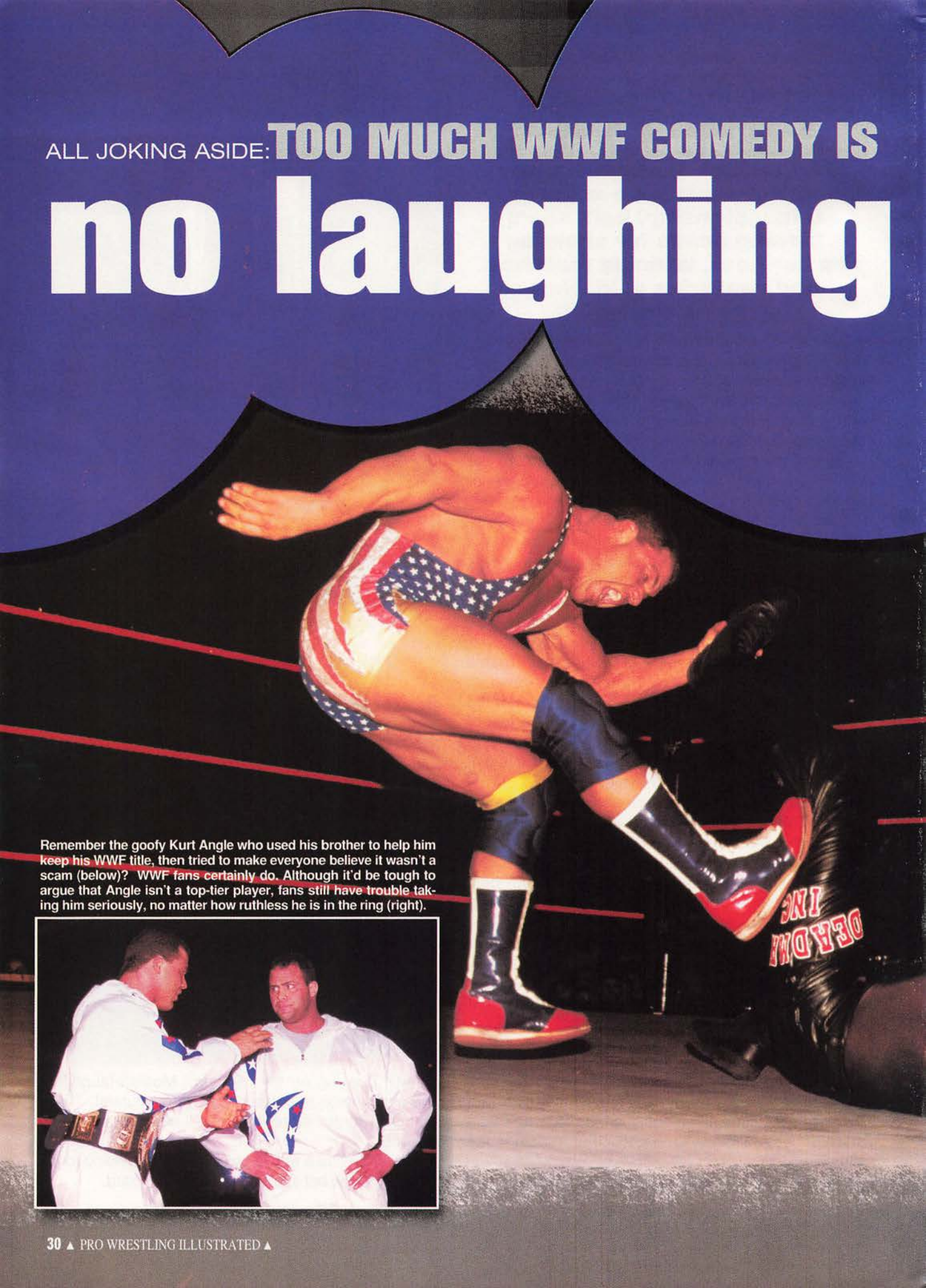
Yes, Trish has a way to go on the long, winding road to respectability, but she's off to a very nice start. □



While there's no question Stratus' wrestling skills have improved dramatically in the last year, she's gotten a lot tougher, too. Her punches pack a lot more power now (above), and she can take a lot more punishment without complaint (below).

ALL JOKING ASIDE:

TOO MUCH WWF COMEDY IS no laughing



Remember the goofy Kurt Angle who used his brother to help him keep his WWF title, then tried to make everyone believe it wasn't a scam (below)? WWF fans certainly do. Although it'd be tough to argue that Angle isn't a top-tier player, fans still have trouble taking him seriously, no matter how ruthless he is in the ring (right).

matter

By Will Welsh

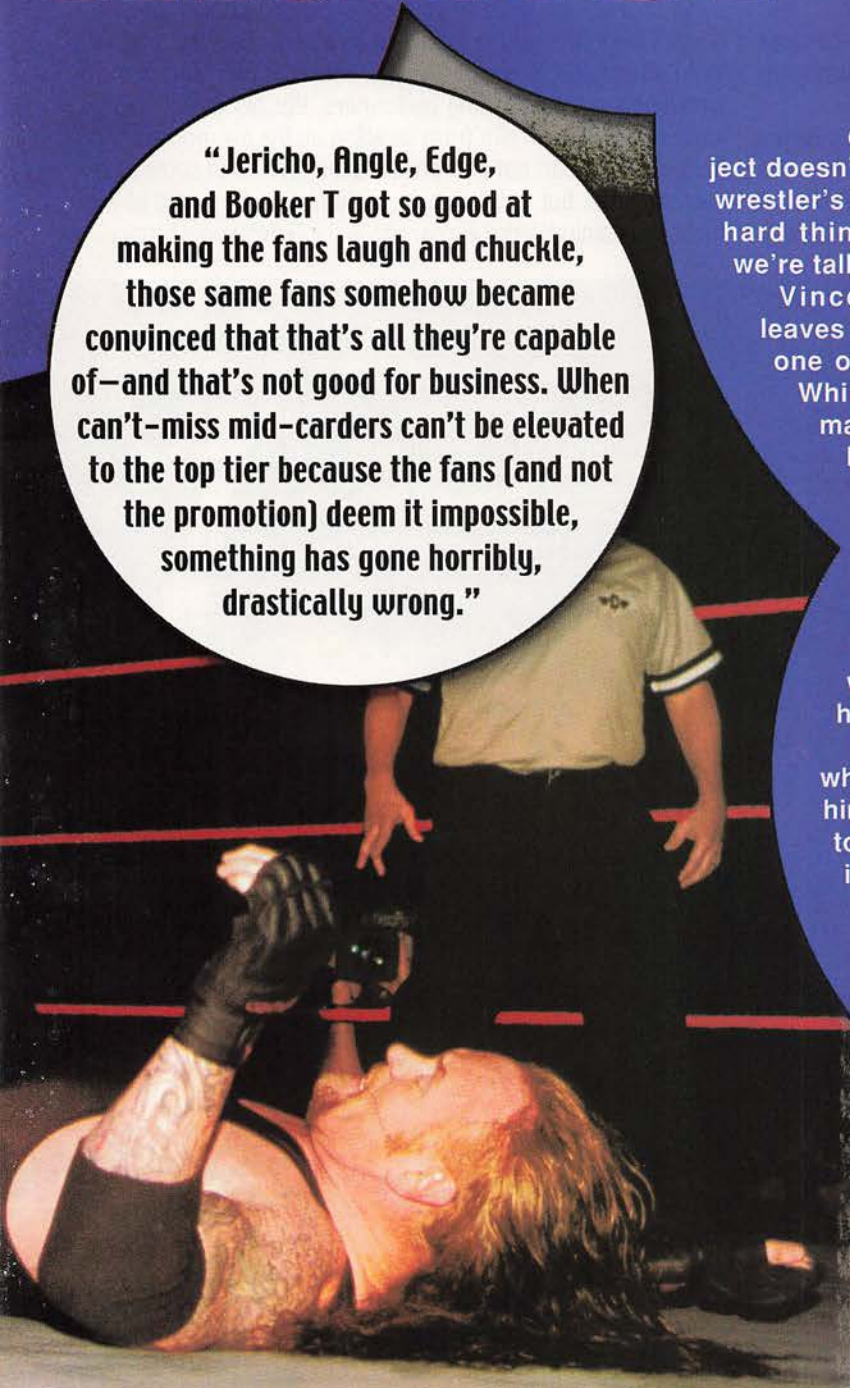
FANTASTICAL, YET believable. Larger than life, yet human. That is how the WWF likes to sell its superstars to its fans. It's a hard combination to put together just once, yet the creative minds of the World Wrestling Federation are asked to find such a personality for every wrestler on the roster. To do so, they must put forth a Herculean effort, but pouring every ounce of their being into the project doesn't mean they're always going to get every wrestler's on-air persona just right. Perfection is a hard thing to perfect, no matter what industry we're talking about.

Vince McMahon, however, is a man who leaves little room for error. He wants every last one of his wrestlers to be something special. While he knows they won't all be main-event material, if a wrestler is under his employ, McMahon expects him or her to be able to hold the interest of fans—and he expects the WWF creative team to create a niche for that wrestler that will help him or her succeed. It's a team concept, and every member of the team is congratulated when things go well and lambasted when things could have been better.

It's a tough, high-stress environment in which to work, which is why those who are hired for creative positions in the WWF tend to either last a very long time or start scouring the employment pages with Speedy Gonzalez-like expediency. But at least those creative minds have more with which to work than they had in years past. As wrestling has evolved into sports entertainment, comedy has taken on a bigger role in the weekly shows. Zany one-line putdowns are as important as powerful single-leg takedowns.

WWF fans watch *Raw* and *Smackdown* for many different reasons. A lot of them like to laugh, and there are laughs aplenty on WWF TV these days. But are we being encouraged to laugh too much as we watch these shows?

"Jericho, Angle, Edge, and Booker T got so good at making the fans laugh and chuckle, those same fans somehow became convinced that that's all they're capable of—and that's not good for business. When can't-miss mid-carders can't be elevated to the top tier because the fans (and not the promotion) deem it impossible, something has gone horribly, drastically wrong."



A case of CBCI: Chris Benoit Comedic Immunity

Believe it or not, Chris Benoit has a sense of humor. Behind the scenes, he smiles, he laughs, and he even cracks jokes every once and a while. He's not always the unfeeling, calculating machine that you see in the ring. Nobody could be that serious every minute of every hour of every day.

So how, then, has Chris Benoit gone his entire career without ever acting the fool? Why hasn't a wrestling executive taken a look at Benoit and said to himself, "This guy would be great in a comedic role. Why don't we try to come up with some ridiculous gimmick for him?"

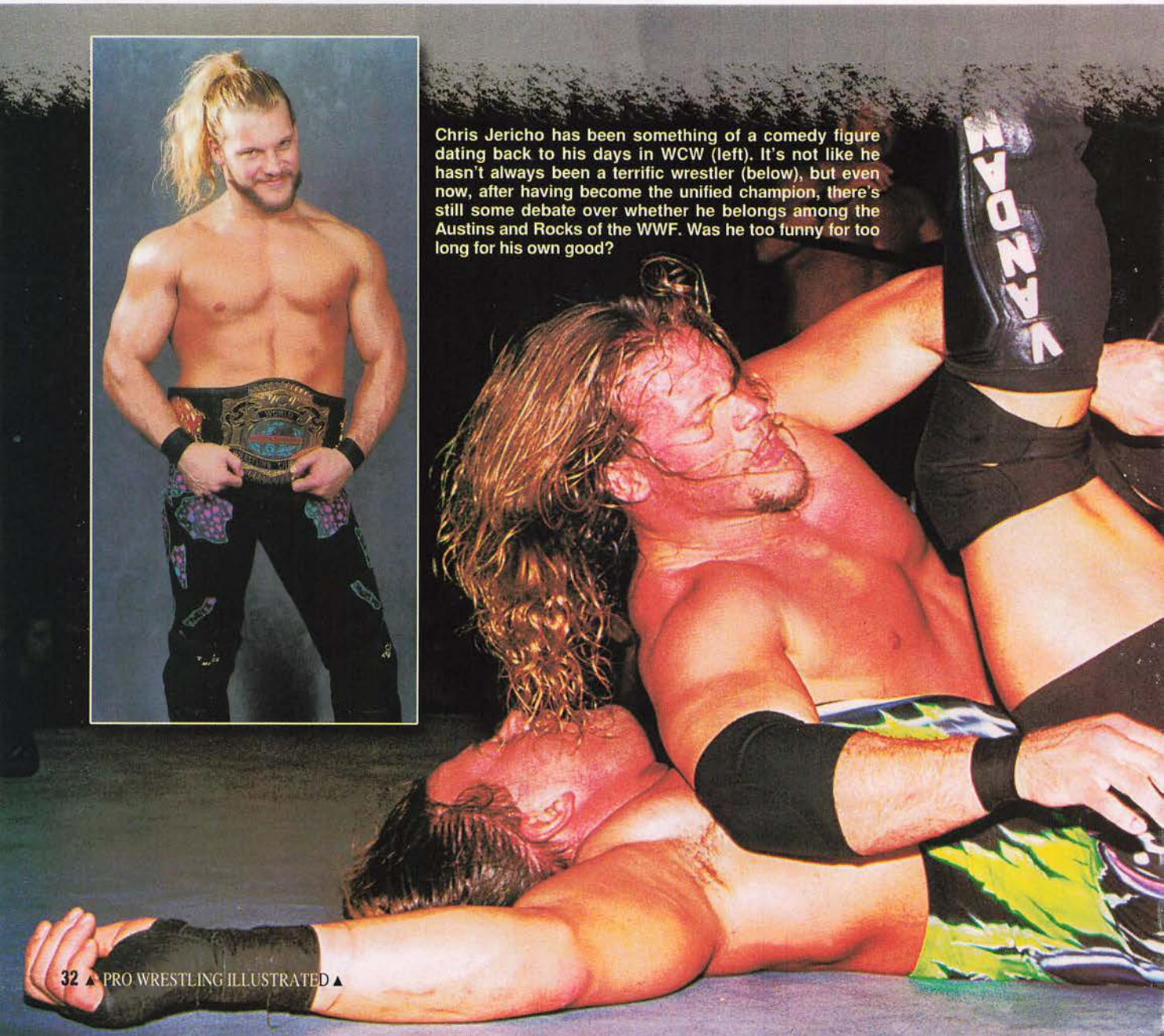
Well, Benoit has avoided such a situation simply because he's too valuable as himself to waste on some throwaway gimmick that will eventually have to be changed.

In other words, there is no better character for Chris Benoit than being Chris Benoit. And Benoit isn't a funny guy. He doesn't make you wonder when he's going to get his shot at hosting *Saturday Night Live*. All he does is make you want to see him wrestle ... every day.

Benoit started his career idolizing The Dynamite Kid. Great choice. At the time, he couldn't have done much better. Dynamite represented everything good about the sport, and he passed most of that information on to a young Benoit. It wasn't long before Benoit gained a reputation as one of wrestling's most astute technicians.

That was back at the start of his career, 16 years ago. He's been a technically brilliant wrestler ever since.

Of course, just because you're a superior technical wrestler doesn't mean that you're forbidden to have a quick wit. Former WWF champion Shawn Michaels, for example, was one of wrestling's greatest in-ring performers. But his in-ring excellence never stopped him from excelling on the microphone. His feud with Bret Hart not only provided the WWF with some of its best matches, but it will also be remembered for some of the most entertaining verbal exchanges in the Federation's history.



Chris Jericho has been something of a comedy figure dating back to his days in WCW (left). It's not like he hasn't always been a terrific wrestler (below), but even now, after having become the unified champion, there's still some debate over whether he belongs among the Austins and Rocks of the WWF. Was he too funny for too long for his own good?

Does Benoit look like a funny guy?

But as we all know, Benoit is no Shawn Michaels in terms of verbal skills. The guy has a hard enough time cutting a regular promo, let alone a promo filled with any kind of jocularity. That's why Benoit has spent most of his career in cliques. In ECW, he was a member of Shane Douglas' Triple Threat. In WCW, Ric Flair chose him as one of the men to continue the Four Horsemen tradition. He later rejoined Douglas in The Revolution. Benoit started his WWF career as a member of The Radicals and at times had Triple-H do a lot of his talking for him.

Shane Douglas. Ric Flair. Triple-H. Three of the best talkers this business has ever seen. No wonder Benoit has problems on the microphone. He's lucky he's even gotten to hold a microphone in his career.

Will Benoit ever try his hand at comedy? We doubt it. We're sure he'll get more comfortable on the microphone, but we can't see the day that he'll want to make a jackass out of himself just because he can.

Yes, Benoit will forever be afflicted with CBCI. Too bad it's not contagious.

Everything, even good-natured, hearty laughter, needs to be tempered with a modicum of moderation. Too much of anything isn't good, and now WWF officials are starting to realize that perhaps a little more seriousness needs to be mixed into the programming, that the proper balance of intense conflict and levity needs to be found.

Why? Well, over the past 18 months or so, it's become increasingly difficult for the WWF to push wrestlers up the main-event ladder. The WWF has given stars like Kurt Angle, Chris Jericho, Edge, and Booker T a number of chances to jump to the Federation's elite group, and all four men have struggled to some degree, despite performing to their absolute best inside and outside of the ring.

It's a shame the way that the majority of wrestling fans have responded to their individual pushes. As of press time, Jericho had been the undisputed WWF champion for more than a month, but even that kind of success couldn't keep fans and insiders from wondering if he had truly joined the Federation's elite or was just a glorified mid-carder getting another taste of glory. Kurt Angle is a former WWF champion and WCW champion, yet every time he develops a backbone, the fans who seem to want to cheer for him are torn. It's

Albert is one big, mean, nasty-looking man who, if he's ever going to be a big star in the WWF, will have to do it by showing people he's very good at beating the hell out of other people. Look at him, observe him, and listen to him and you'll notice very little funny about him. Yet he was recently cast as "The Hip-Hop Hippo"? Does that make any sense?

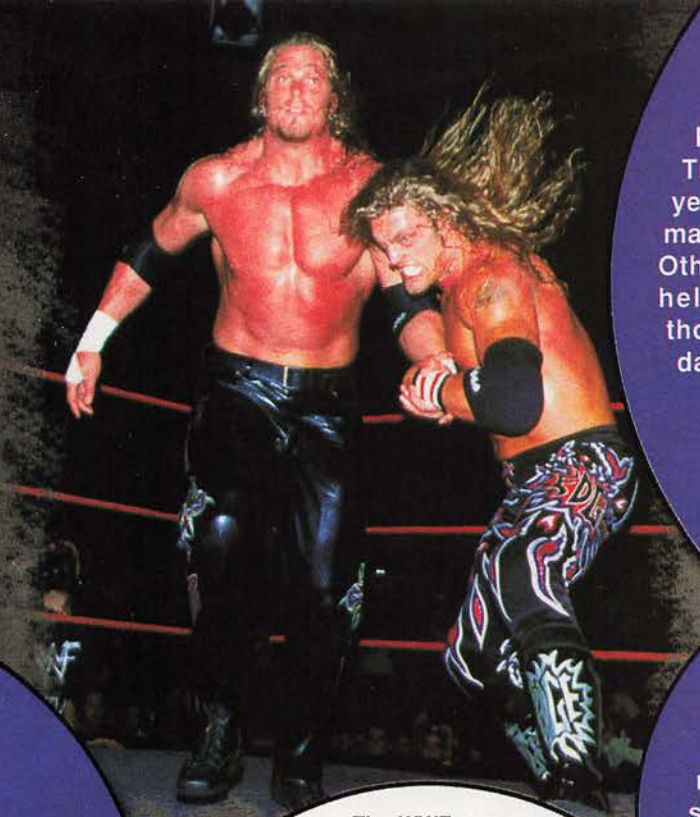
If there was one WCW transplant who wasn't going to be made a comedy figure in the WWF, it was Booker T. He was a serious, respectful WCW champion at the time that company was sold, and he was going to give the WCW faction credibility. Okay, maybe not.

hard for someone to portray himself as a goofy tough guy and expect fans to get past the goofy to appreciate and get behind the tough guy. By all rights, Edge and Booker T should be right on the cusp of full-time main-event positions, but they're having to work that much harder to take those final steps up the WWF ladder.

Strangely enough, comedy is the culprit. Jericho, Angle, Edge, and Booker T got so good at making the fans laugh and chuckle, those same fans somehow became convinced that that's all they're capable of—and that's not good for business. When can't-miss mid-carders can't be elevated to the top tier because the fans (and not the promotion) deem it impossible, something has gone horribly, drastically wrong.

The phenomenon doesn't stop at the very top of the mid-card, either. Looking at the WWF's entire roster, there are only a handful of men who haven't been utilized as comic relief at some point in their career. Lance Storm, who is one of the Federation's most underutilized talents, is in dire need of a character overhaul. Not because there's anything wrong with his ultra-serious persona—wrestling needs hard edges like his—but because he's been made to look like such a bungling buffoon in recent months. There's also the Hurricane Helms situation. He's stupendous in his role as a mild-mannered superhero, but will the fans ever be able to get behind him once he tears off the cape and tries to go legitimate? And don't get us started on the new-and-improved (?) Albert. That guy should never have been allowed to smile, let alone dance with Scotty Too Hotty. "The Hip-Hop Hippo"?

Christian. The Big Show. Tajiri. None of them is a main-eventer,



The WWF creative team is probably wondering right now what to do with Edge. He has size, a good look, charisma, and plenty of wrestling skill. He, too, was a comedy figure for so long (in a tag team with Christian) that it's been hard for him to try to start making that transformation to serious main-eventer.

You could easily make an argument that the Hurricane persona was the best thing that could have happened to Shane Helms. Given the WWF's track record with light heavyweights, would he have gotten any push sans ridiculous gimmick? Probably not, but not every mid-card guy should be portrayed as a comedian.

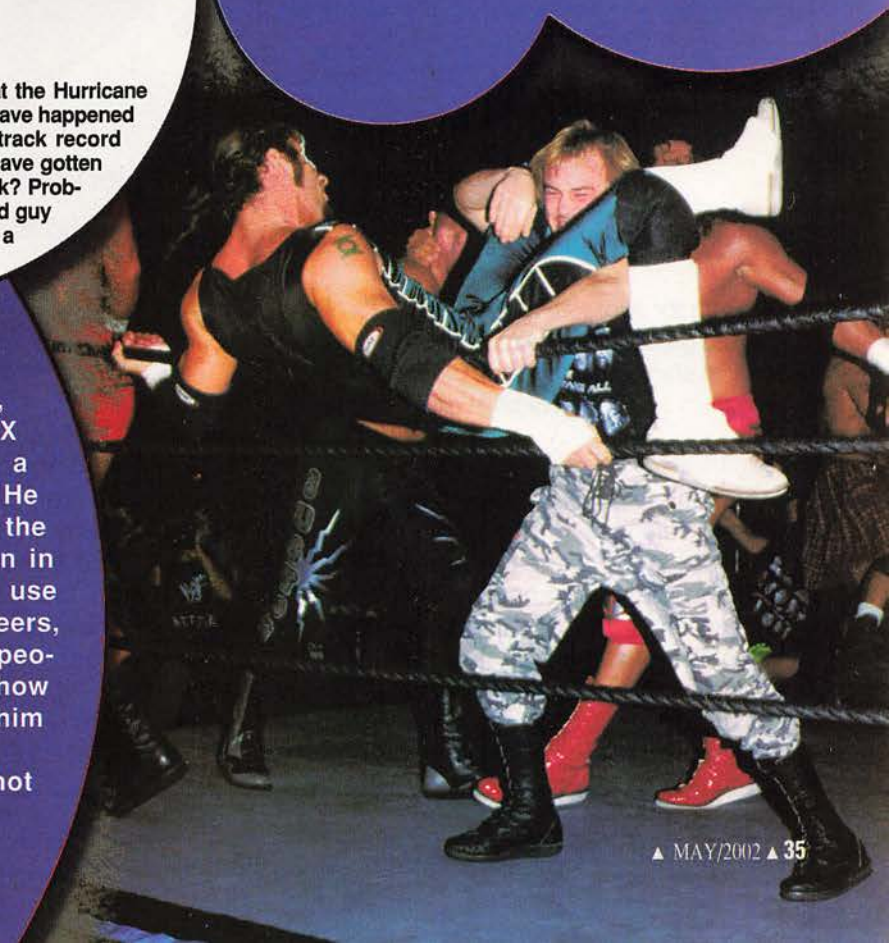
so they're funny.

Even Triple-H had a difficult time convincing fans he was no longer the wisecracking, Michael Buffer-imitating leader of DX and was to be taken seriously as a sadistic main-eventer. Yet he did it. He did it by committing himself to being the meanest, nastiest, most vicious man in the industry. He did it by refusing to use his sense of humor to get cheers or jeers, even though he could have. He made people hate him, and when they realized how good he was, they came to respect him as the versatile performer that he is.

Of course, it'd be easy to say that not every wrestler has the skills that Triple-H has. Maybe not, but try finding someone who pegged Triple-H as a future megastar as recently as three years ago. He made himself a star (and a serious main-eventer) through hard work and commitment. Others *can* do the same, but they could use a little help from the creative department. Heck, even those *not* destined for main events can be intimidating.

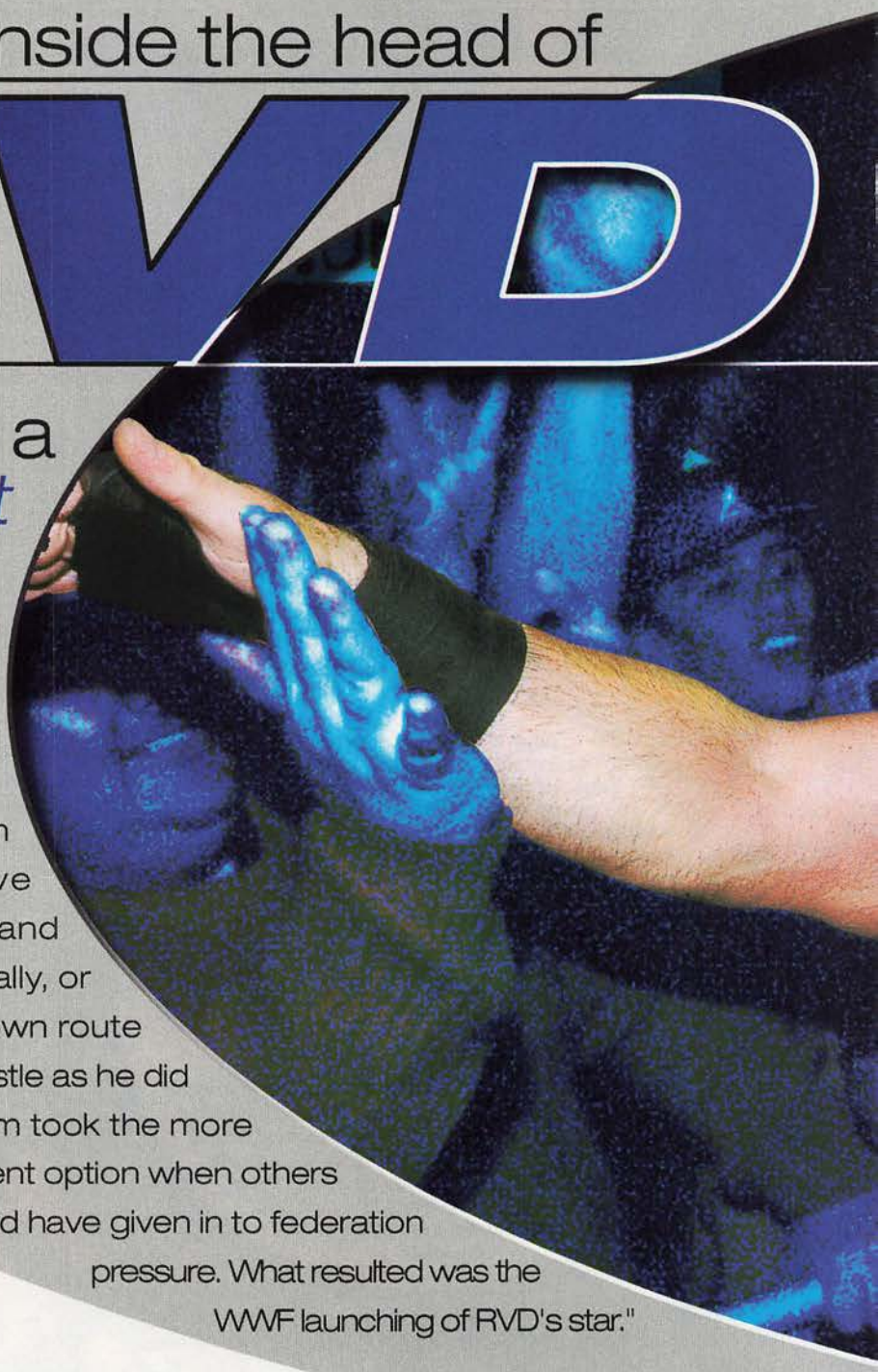
Anyone remember the good ol' days of the sport, when even mid-carders and undercard wrestlers were *feared?* The Warlord might have never amounted to much, but he sure was one scary-looking S.O.B. with no sense of humor whatsoever. Former Chicago Bear Steve McMichael wasn't used as a comedy figure during his Four Horsemen run with WCW. (Maybe he should have been, but he wasn't.) And what happened to the Arn Andersons of the wrestling world? "Double-A" might have never made it to the main event, but he was a solid, no-frills wrestler in a crucial supporting role. It's hard to imagine Ric Flair having the success that he had throughout his career if "The Enforcer" hadn't been by his side.

Someone needs to take a long, hard look at the role of comedy in the WWF. Undercard and mid-card performers can have serious, compelling storylines, too—and that's no joke. □



Inside the head of RVD

A man with a *different* definition of success



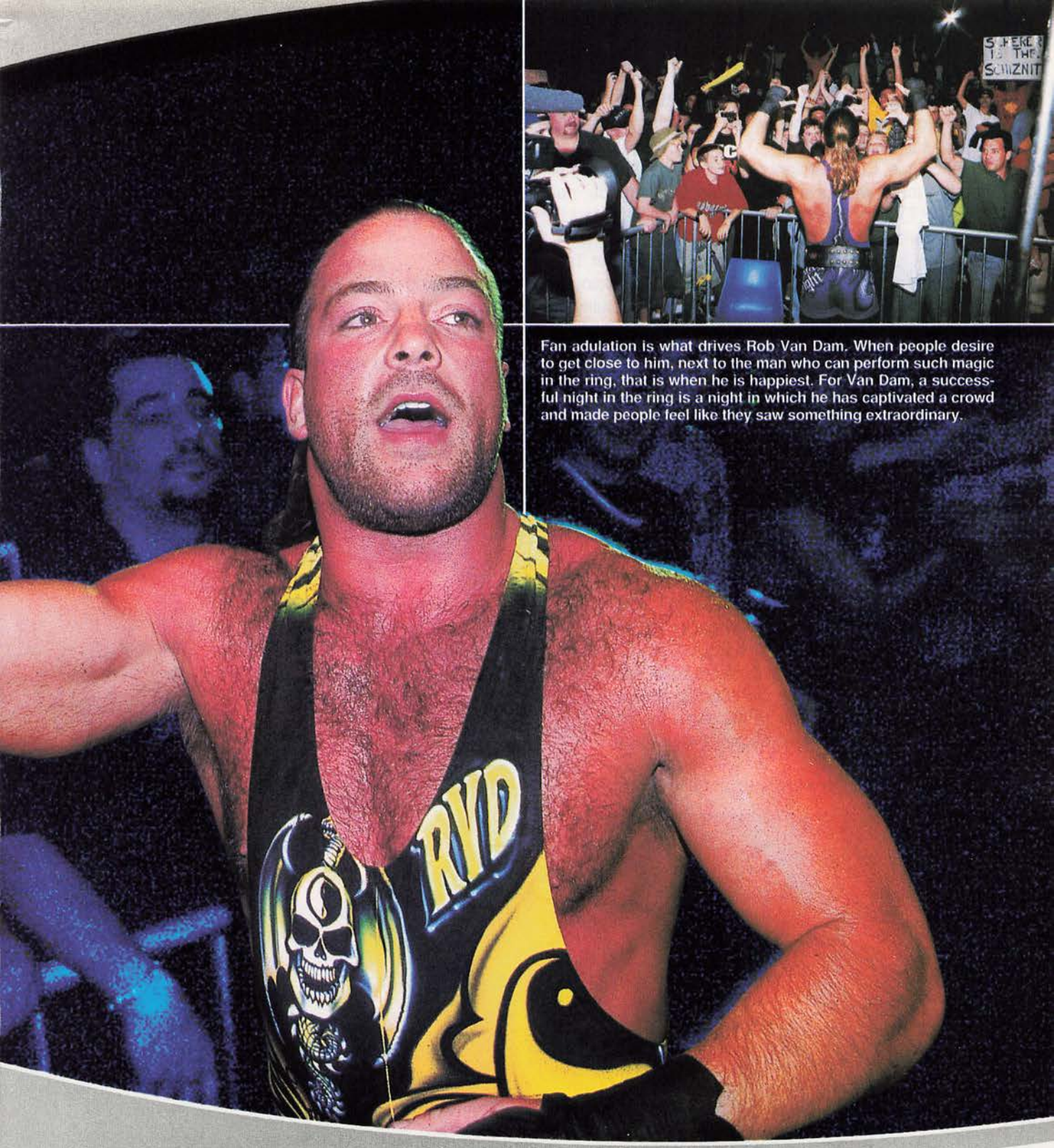
"Van Dam had a choice to make when he debuted in the WWF: He could have conformed to the WWF and changed his style drastically, or he could have gone his own route and continued to wrestle as he did in ECW. Van Dam took the more independent option when others would have given in to federation pressure. What resulted was the WWF launching of RVD's star."

By Will Welsh

"Born for success he seemed,
With grace to win, with heart to hold,
With shining gifts that took all eyes."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882),
American poet and essayist

Rob Van Dam knows he's good. You could safely say that he knows he's great. He also knows that he's one of the WWF's most popular stars, and he knows that the matches he's in, regardless of the opponent, will often be hailed as being of five-star quality. Van Dam knows that when he attempts the split-legged moonsault or the five-star frog splash, the fans will ooh and ahh—as will many of his co-workers watching in the back.

Basically, Rob Van Dam knows that he truly is "The Whole Damn Show" to many of the paying customers in the crowd. No one needs to remind him. He doesn't need a pat on the back or a "Good job, buddy" to let him know he does his job extraordinarily well. Unlike most of his locker room compatriots, he doesn't need championship gold around his waist to remind him that he's a success, either. For a man like RVD, collected trinkets are nice, but they



Fan adulation is what drives Rob Van Dam. When people desire to get close to him, next to the man who can perform such magic in the ring, that is when he is happiest. For Van Dam, a successful night in the ring is a night in which he has captivated a crowd and made people feel like they saw something extraordinary.

don't measure a man's worth—the fans do.

And the fans love Rob Van Dam.

* * *

"Success is man's god."

—Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.), Athenian tragic dramatist

RVD's popularity has always been astonishing. He was ECW's number-one star by a wide margin during the promotion's last few years. Not even The Sandman garnered bigger pops or enjoyed a bigger following. Even when he wasn't around, RVD owned the ECW fans—and he did so without ever winning the ECW

World heavyweight title.

Without ever taking a serious shot at the title.

Heck, there were times when we weren't certain he knew the title existed.

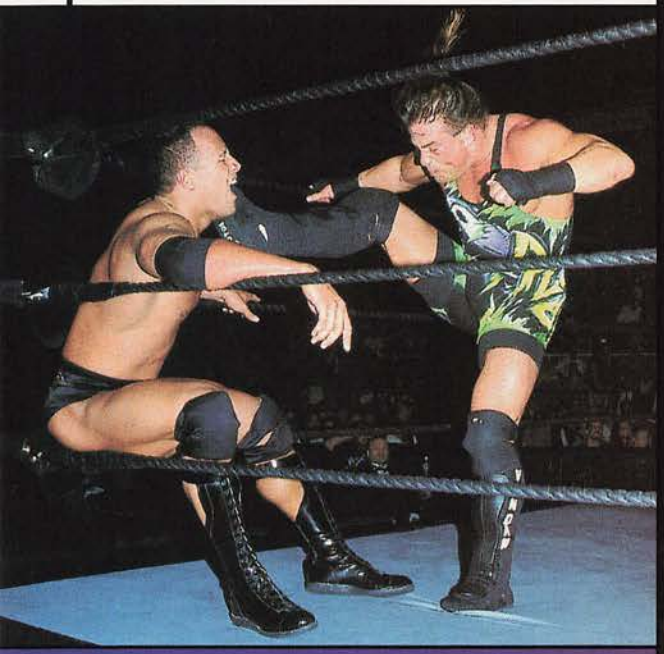
Of course, ECW officials couldn't allow their top drawing card to be without a title, so Van Dam proudly wore the ECW TV title. For nearly two years, Van Dam was the TV champion. Nobody could beat him for the strap. Not Sabu, not Lance Storm, not Jerry Lynn, and not Tazz. Could you picture The Rock or Steve Austin holding the Intercontinental title for two years and not pursuing the big belt? Sounds ridiculous, right? It worked for RVD.

In the end, Van Dam ended his own TV title reign with an ill-fated baseball slide that snapped an ankle. Ironically, he injured himself just as he was getting into a feud with Mike Awesome, the reigning ECW World champion.

It's strange how often things like that happen.

For ECW, having RVD play the role of secondary champion made sense. If Van Dam could remain the promotion's most popular performer without the World title, what would be the point in having it around his waist? If he could sustain his momentum as a secondary champion, it behooved ECW to have another wrestler, perhaps one not as well-regarded or admired, with the title. In keeping the title away from RVD, ECW saw two solid World champions emerge: Justin Credible and Mike Awesome did more than just wear the belt during their reigns; they took the title to new levels.

All along, Van Dam knew what he was doing.



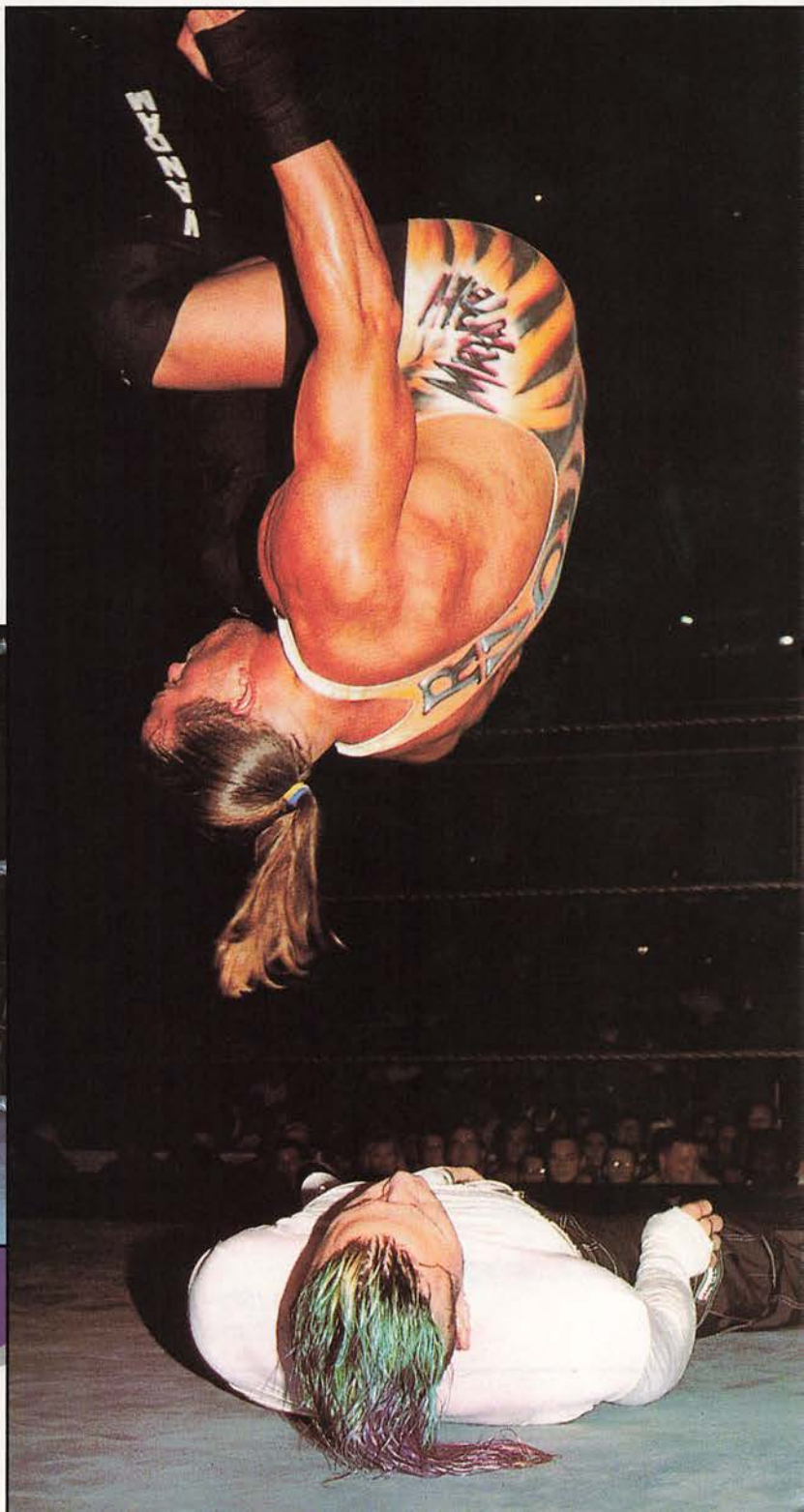
Notice that RVD did not call out The Rock or another WWF megastar when he arrived back in July. Unlike Dallas Page, he didn't want to become "famous" at another huge star's expense. He knew he could win over WWF fans just by being Rob Van Dam.

He was still the main event no matter what belt he wore to the ring. Nothing and no one could change that success. His position atop ECW might as well have been etched in granite.

* * *

"The secret of success is constancy to purpose."
—Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), British statesman and author

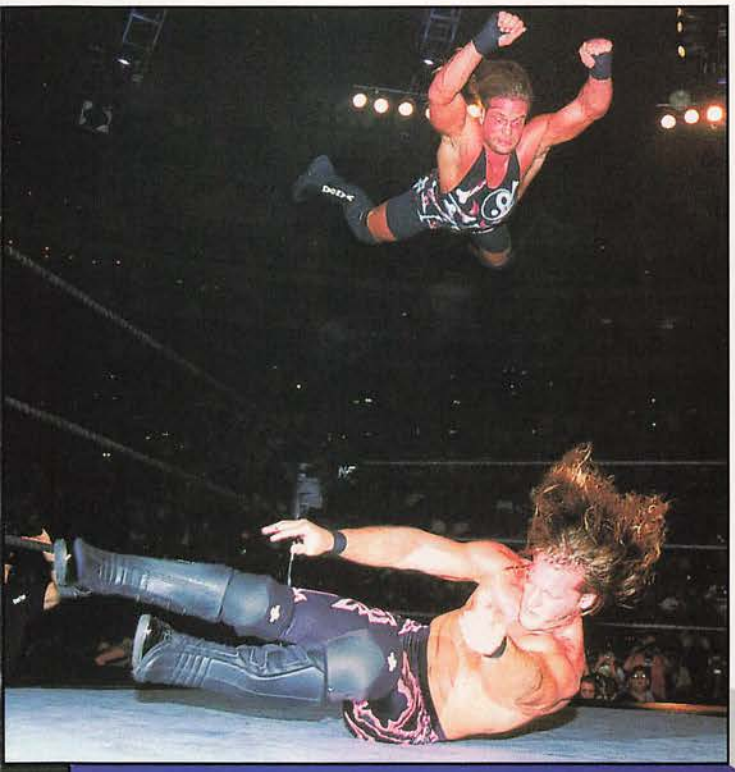
So how does Van Dam do it? How does he manage to remain so outrageously celebrated despite never reaching the mountaintop, a.k.a. a world championship?



Has he magically enchanted the fans into cheering for him with pixie dust?

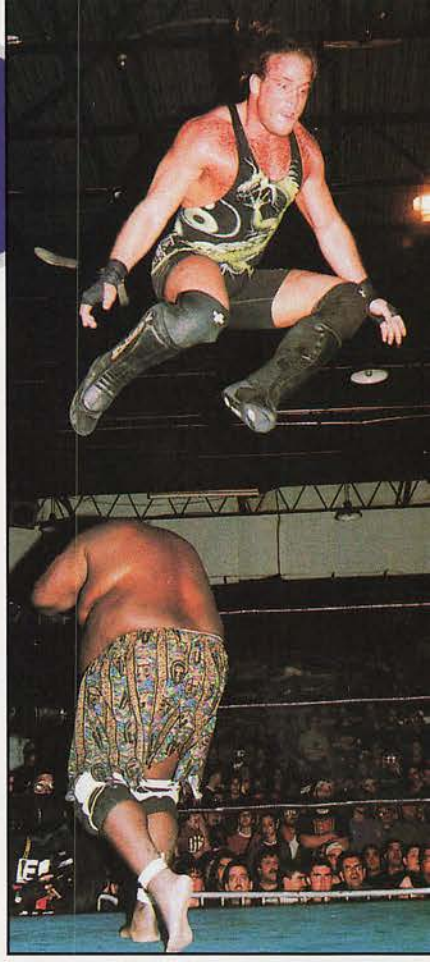
Well, yes, RVD has magically enchanted the fans, but he hasn't used any pixie dust. Instead, he's used his love of the sport—and his love for *the way* he participates in the sport—to win and keep the fans' attention.

Van Dam's fan base grew because he was original. When he debuted in ECW, nobody had seen anything quite like him. Even though Van Dam incorporated moves from Japan and Mexico and his upbeat tempo was reminiscent of wrestling in both countries, his in-ring style was wonderfully unusual. It still is—and that's more a tribute to Van Dam's self-confidence than anything the WWF has wanted him to do with him.



The matches RVD had with Jeff Hardy shortly after he arrived in the WWF were grueling, but they were also spectacular (left), and Van Dam is willing to put his body on the line to entertain. His five-star frog splash (above) always causes him pain, but again, crowd reaction makes it worth it.

Van Dam had a choice to make when he debuted in the WWF: He could have conformed to the WWF and changed his style drastically, or he could have gone his own route and continued to wrestle as he did in ECW. Van Dam took the more independent option when others would have given in to Federation pressure. What resulted was the WWF launching of RVD's star. The hardcore title provided quite the launching pad. Winning the hardcore title allowed Van Dam to wrestle *his* match on a night-in and night-out basis. Though his matches were shorter then they were in ECW, they packed just as much gusto and excitement—maybe even more. Because Van Dam was forced to use his full arsenal in a span of six or seven minutes in comparison to 20 or 30 minutes, RVD's early matches in the WWF were a blur of speedy and sometimes random risk-taking, and it quickly became apparent that the fans wanted to see more.



Anyone remember a man by the name of Uganda in ECW? Just look at his body and you'll assume that he isn't much of a high-flyer and doesn't do much of anything particularly quickly. Van Dam managed to get a pretty good match out of him, though. When RVD is in the ring against anyone, you're bound to see something exciting.

Van Dam gave them more by forgoing shots at the World title in order to hold on to the hardcore title as long as possible. When The Undertaker finally beat him for the belt at Vengeance, the hardcore title had arguably become the WWF's second most prestigious title (quick, name anyone besides Edge who held the Intercontinental title during that same time period), and Van Dam emerged as one of the Fed's hottest draws.

And all because Van Dam chose to wrestle and succeed on his own terms—not on somebody else's.

* * *

"Most people judge men only by success or by fortune."

—Francois duc de La Rochefoucauld (1613-1680), 17th century French writer

La Rouchefoucauld was right, except for the omission of four very important words: Most people judge men only by success or by fortune *of their own taste.* In other words, a banker with no family whose sole focus throughout life has been the accumulation of wealth won't look upon a happily married but poor father of four as being successful, even though he very much is in his own way.

Right now, there might still be a few wrestlers wondering if RVD is a success. Believe us when we tell you that he is—and that Van Dam knows that he is, too. □

"AND NOW I'M GLAD I DIDN'T KNOW
THE WAY IT ALL WOULD END, THE WAY IT ALL WOULD GO
OUR LIVES ARE BETTER LEFT TO CHANCE
I COULD HAVE MISSED THE PAIN
BUT I'D HAVE HAD TO MISS THE DANCE."
—"THE DANCE," GARTH BROOKS (WRITTEN BY TONY ARATA)

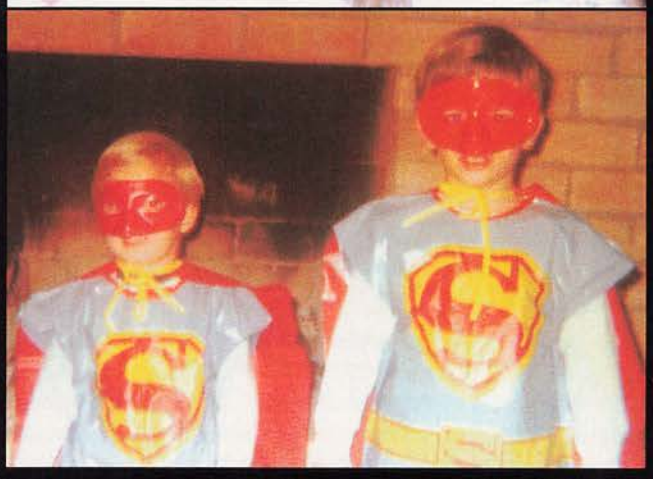
RUSS HAAS

1974-2001

"I FEEL VERY LUCKY THAT I GOT TO KNOW HIM."

By Brandi Mankiewicz

IT SEEMS LIKE only once or twice in a lifetime, a truly extraordinary person comes along. Russ Haas (and his brother, Charlie) probably got more acclaim in the PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED family of magazines in recent years than any other rising stars. Those who had the chance to see the Haas brothers wrestle knew they deserved it. To say that Russ was destined for greatness was an understatement. His dedication and determination showed that he had the mental makeup of a superstar. And if his ring work didn't prove it to you, his charisma did. Even more so, Russ had that intangible element of excellence that you don't see in too many budding stars.



March 11, 1975: Russ and his mom celebrate his first birthday (top).

1978: Russ (age four) and Cara (age two) pose with newborn sister, Kelly (middle).

October 1980: These brothers did everything together, even dressing as Superman for Halloween (bottom)!

Unfortunately, Russ never got the opportunity to show a national audience just how talented he was. He died in his sleep of a massive coronary caused by heart disease at his home in Cincinnati on December 15. The 27-year-old had spent the previous night at a Heartland Wrestling Association show in Springfield, Ohio, joking and hanging out with his fellow HWA wrestlers. That night, as he had done so many times since suffering a heart attack brought upon by a blood clot on September 24, he expressed his desire to get back into the ring to anyone who would listen to him.

"THERE ARE SO MANY DREAMS THAT CAN'T BE DONE NOW. WE WERE GONNA BUY HARLEYS AND RIDE TO THE BEACH. WE WERE GONNA LIVE BY EACH OTHER SO OUR CHILDREN COULD GROW UP TOGETHER. WE WERE GONNA DO SO MUCH TOGETHER."

But there was much more to him than just wrestling. Those who got to know him remember not as a great wrestler, but as a wonderful human being.

Thomas Russell Haas was born on March 11, 1974, in Little Rock, Arkansas. His parents, Charles and Noreen, instilled strong values in their second son from an early age, as they did with their three other children. His positive attitude, love of life, and dedication to his goals were just a few of the qualities that those who knew him came to respect about him. His journey was one of achievements; the fact that he had so much fun along the way was a byproduct of his spirit. Russ knew when to make light of tense situations. He knew that humor was something that could diffuse just about any problem, and he used it often.

Once his family settled in Edmond, Oklahoma, Russ joined the junior high school wrestling team. His older brother, Charlie, was already a two-year veteran of the team, but he insists that he had little to do with his kid brother following in his footsteps.

"Russ just did what his friends did," recalled Charlie. "It was just coincidence that he wanted to play football and wrestle like me. He also played baseball, which I didn't."

When it came time for

Russ poses for his seventh grade school photo.

Russ to choose a college, though, Charlie does admit to a bit of brotherly badgering.

"I did encourage him," laughed Charlie. "I just wanted him at Seton Hall to wrestle along with me."

Once both brothers were through with college, Russ also needed encouragement to join the pro ranks, even though it was a childhood dream of his—one of many dreams he shared with Charlie. "We had always talked about it," said Charlie. "I told him that I was going to do it and I talked him into it so we could be together."

The brother duo sought out "Iron" Mike Sharpe to teach them the basics of pro wrestling. Soon, the Haas brothers made their debut at a Jersey All Pro show. After toiling on the Northeastern independent circuit for a few years, the Haases were introduced to East Coast Wrestling Association promoter Jim Kettner and the WWF's Kevin Kelly by New Jersey-based promoter Dennis Coraluzzo. The two started training with Kettner, which meant they had to drive three hours from their homes in northern New Jersey to Wilmington, Delaware, several times each week. Kettner remembers his protégés well.

December 30, 1997: The Haas family pose for a family photo at Christmastime. From left to right, back: Deedra and Russ; From left to right, middle, Charlie, Jason Church (Kelly's husband), Kelly, Cara; Left to right, front: Chuck and Noreen.

"Russ was always proud that he was the acrobat of the team," Kettner recalled. "He was a legit gymnast. At the end of every practice, the two would do kip-ups. Russ would always do his right away. Charlie would try four or five and fall on his backside. It was the one thing Russ had on Charlie."

Their hard work paid off, though. It earned them a spot with Kettner's ECWA, where they quickly became the top tag team—with Kelly (moonlighting as a heel manager) at their side.

"One of my favorite times was when we started a riot at St. Matthew's Parish," Kelly wrote on wwf.com. "Nobody could have ever imagined that two clean-cut college guys and a nerdy announcer could have created such a scene. The best part about the whole riot was that Kettner was hot! Russ, Charlie, and I came slinking up to Jim's office door and with our best angelic faces, we said we were sorry."

Shortly after that mini-riot in the parish hall in Wilmington, the two were signed to WWF developmental contracts, which meant they had to pack their bags for Tennessee and a stint in Memphis Championship Wrestling. There, the two encountered a new set of challenges, as they were learning, training, and wrestling with other WWF hopefuls.

"A lot of people knew Russ as a wrestler, but they didn't know him as a person," said Victoria, a WWF developmental wrestler who first met Russ in Mem-

June 17, 2000: Russ and Deedra's wedding day. Left to right: Jason Church, Kelly, Cara, Deedra, Russ, Noreen, Chuck, and Charlie.

The Haases at their double-teaming best

KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE ... WITHOUT HIS BROTHER

What is a big brother to do when he loses his little brother so suddenly and so tragically? The void Russ Haas' death left in Charlie's life is indescribably huge. He has more important things to worry about than his career. He must deal with an emptiness in his life that will never be filled. Big brothers are supposed to guide their little brothers through life, give them advice from a wiser perspective, maybe even encourage them to try different things. Big brothers are supposed to be their little brothers' best friends.

But this story is different than most brother stories. Charlie and Russ did more than the usual brotherly pair. A lot of brothers compete on their high school wrestling teams together. A few even go to the same college. But very few enter the pro ranks together, and how many get WWF contracts together? The Haases were the only brother team signed by the Federation in recent years.

"The Haas brothers had such a bright future, it was amazing," said WWF expert Thomas Pilliard. "There hasn't been a brother team like them since the Von Erichs."

Together, the Haas brothers had so much potential. They had a genuine love for the sport, a remarkable desire to become the best they could possibly be. And that showed in their ever-changing arsenal of double-team moves. But none of those great finishers can be executed by one man. And as life slowly begins to return to normal for Charlie, he must adjust to the idea that he has gone from being part of a phenomenal team to being just another singles prodigy.

"The allure of the Haases was that there were two of them," said Pilliard. "The WWF already had Kurt Angle, a great collegiate athlete. With Russ and Charlie, they had two great amateur athletes who had a great look and chemistry. It was like having two Kurt Angles. They were definitely unique. Charlie alone isn't unique. He now has to find a way to make himself marketable without looking like an Angle clone."

More important, Charlie has to find the strength to continue. It's hard enough to deal with such a tragic loss when you realize that every day, the other half of your existence is no longer there to go out to eat with, to talk with, and to just see on a daily basis. Charlie has to look at his corner of the ring and see just ropes and a ring-post. He won't have Russ there to push him at training sessions or during tough matches. Will he be able to move on?

"Charlie has to make those decisions for himself," said Pilliard. "He needs to find it within himself to go on. As a singles wrestler, he has to rise above everyone else and devise a way to make himself stand out from the rest."

If he can't do these things, his potential as a wrestler will be wasted. He won't catch any breaks from the other wrestlers in the WWF or those trying to make it to the WWF, either. Charlie has to face head-on the reality that Russ is no longer there with him, and he seems ready.

"The last three months with Russ being out, it gave me a chance to set a foundation as a singles wrestler," Charlie said. "I was developing my own moves. It was almost as if he was there to make sure I was able to move on."

phis. "He was extremely funny. He always had a witty comment. He made going to the shows enjoyable. He joked about everything. Russ reminded me of my brothers in that way. He was always very protective. He kept an eye on me, and that made me and my husband feel at ease. I feel very lucky that I got to know him, because he was a great person."

Russ was one of those people who could find humor in anything, even when the jokes came at his own expense. After suffering his first heart attack, for example, he was able to crack jokes about his condition when others would just cringe.

"Russ found humor in his problem," said Les Thatcher, head trainer at the HWA's WWF developmental territory. "Most guys didn't know how to react to it. He made light of it so the others followed the way."

Russ' condition garnered him the nickname of "The Cardiac Kid," but he laughed right along with the others about it. Tragically, the condition turned out to be no joke. Before his death, two cardiologists from the same medical group cleared him to resume training. All he needed to make his return was clearance from a third specialist. That evaluation was scheduled for December 18. He died 72 hours earlier.

2001: The Memphis crew pose in the rain. Clockwise from left: Christian York, Victoria, Russ, Ekmo, and Joey Matthews (above).

2001: Russ loved animals. Here, he shows off his new puppy, Zeus (top right).

December 2001: Russ and Charlie pose just two weeks prior to Russ' death. Russ finally looked as muscular as his brother (bottom right).

In addition to his parents and brother, Russ left behind a grieving wife, Deedra, with whom he had shared the better part of 10 years, as well as sisters Kelly and Cara. Charlie can't help but think about all the plans they had, the future they had mapped out.

"There are so many dreams that can't be done now," he said. "We were gonna buy Harleys and ride to the beach. We were gonna live by each other so our children could grow up together. We were gonna do so much together."

* * *

"I can't remember if I cried
When I read about his widowed bride
But something touched me deep inside
The day the music died."

—"American Pie," Don McLean

To those who never had the chance to watch Russ in the ring, it might be difficult to fully understand the loss. Perhaps a comparison can be made to the death of musician Ritchie Valens, who was killed in a 1959 plane crash at age 17. Like Valens, Russ was a prodigy at his craft. Unfortunately, like Valens, his career and life were cut short without warning. We'll never know just how good either could have been. Will words of praise be penned about him many years after his death, just as Valens' death was memorialized in the song "American Pie"? Probably not. But Russ Haas' life will always be a song in the hearts of those who knew him best. □

Chris Jericho probably won't be holding up two belts by the time WrestleMania X-9 rolls around. It'll be interesting to see if, after the split, the WWF has two world champions, one world champion who defends against contenders in both divisions, or maybe a secondary champion on top of each division and one world champ.

THE MANIA TO END ALL MANIAS!

WHAT WILL WRESTLING LOOK LIKE BY WRESTLEMANIA X-9?

By Harry Burkett

VINCE McMAHON AND Ric Flair are on a collision course and the stakes have never been higher. At press time, the Royal Rumble was being viewed as the event at which the WWF would begin its split into two promotions. No matter how the breakup manifests itself, how will it affect the industry and, specifically, the WWF's premier event, WrestleMania? If the

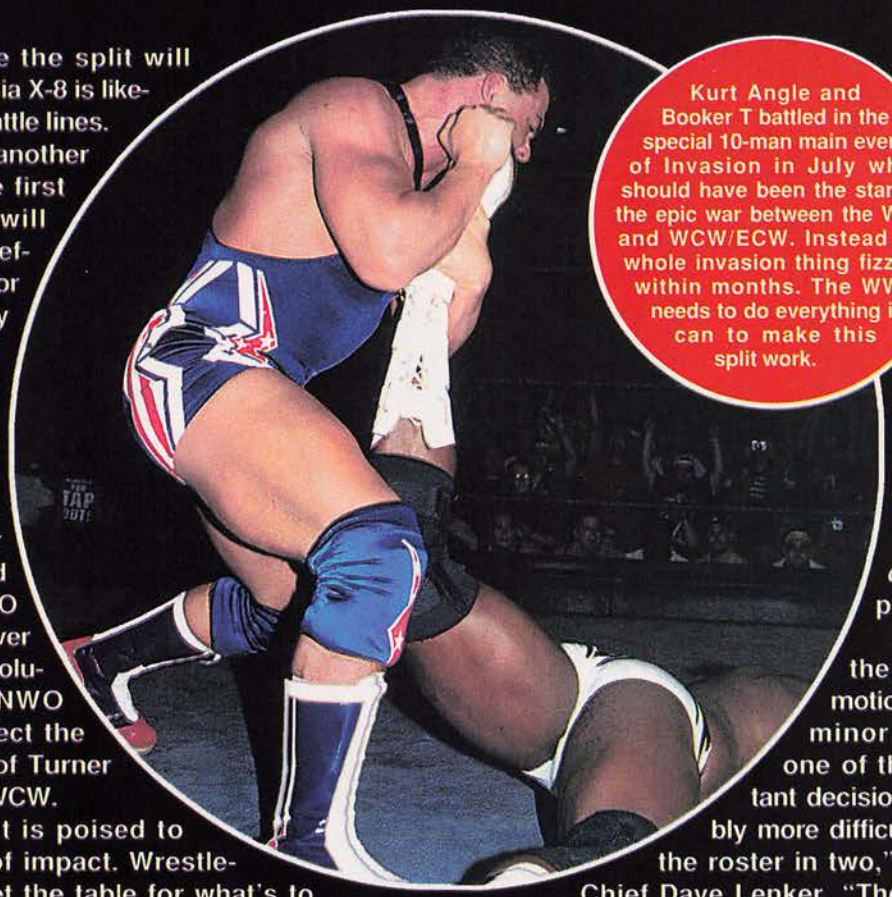
Rumble is where the split will begin, WrestleMania X-8 is likely to solidify the battle lines.

This isn't just another storyline. For the first time, an angle will have a dramatic effect on how a major wrestling company is structured and operates its everyday business. The New World Order came close, because there was talk that *Nitro* or *Thunder* would become an NWO show, but that never happened. As revolutionary as the NWO was, it didn't affect the business model of Turner Broadcasting or WCW.

The WWF split is poised to make that kind of impact. WrestleMania X-8 will set the table for what's to come. But, by WrestleMania X-9, the wrestling landscape will almost certainly be vastly different. What will the WWF look like by the time it hosts the 19th WrestleMania?

It might resemble the National Football League or Major League Baseball by 2003, with WrestleMania being more like the Super Bowl or World Series, the showcase of both divisions. If the WWF is divided into two promotions, don't count on WCW being the second league, considering the lackluster Alliance storyline last year.

Sources suggest Vince McMahon is leaning toward creating two promotions within the WWF brand, instead of creating a new federation altogether. Neither TNN nor UPN would care for the idea of losing the WWF franchise in favor of the much-maligned WCW brand. Why would these networks want a brand that lost the wrestling war for TNT and TBS?



Kurt Angle and Booker T battled in the special 10-man main event of Invasion in July what should have been the start of the epic war between the WWF and WCW/ECW. Instead the whole invasion thing fizzled within months. The WWF needs to do everything it can to make this split work.

The working plan is that one promotion will get *Raw* and the other will receive *Smackdown*. Would those be the names of the two leagues, *WWF Raw* and *WWF Smackdown?* It's a possibility.

"The names of the two WWF promotions seems like a minor point, but it's one of the most important decisions of all, probably more difficult than splitting the roster in two," said Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker. "The names would have to be rather generic, because the WWF will have to live with them for a while. 'WWF Attitude' and 'WWF Extreme' sound as good as any. Maybe 'WWF Flair' vs. 'WWF McMahon.'"

If the WWF wants to revisit the Alliance theme, there could be WWF World Championship Wrestling vs. WWF Extreme Championship Wrestling, with the World Wrestling Federation titleholder being the champion of both. Or the WWF could choose more traditional names, such as WWF Championship Wrestling and WWF All-Star Wrestling.

WrestleMania X-9 could be the first battleground between the two promotions. The WWF could institutionalize a champion vs. champion match for each WrestleMania. The winner could be declared the World champion and the loser could be awarded the Intercontinental title. Then the two competitors would be allowed to defend their respective championships throughout the rest of the year. The battle over which promotion would claim the World champion would create a built-in rivalry.

Test and Edge wrestled in the WCW U.S.-WWF Intercontinental title unification match at Survivor Series, with Edge ultimately prevailing. With the WWF splitting in two, it might be time to split that unified title back in two.

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As a result, championships would be significant again.

Then again, both promotions could share the same World champion throughout the year. Each league could have its own major title, perhaps the Intercontinental and United States championships. These two champions could battle at WrestleMania for the opportunity to wrestle the World champion later in the show. Or the Intercontinental champ could wrestle the U.S. champ at a pay-per-view in February, when there's usually a creative lull. The winner of this playoff would receive a World title match at WrestleMania.

Are any of these scenarios likely to occur?

"Making the Intercontinental and U.S. titles the major belts for each promotion is a good idea, and so is having some kind of champion vs. champion match at each WrestleMania," said WWF expert Thomas Pilliard. "I'm sure Vince McMahon has a general scheme in mind, but he might have made a conscious decision to develop the various scenarios as we go along.

"Some of those institutionalized things, like the winner of the Royal Rumble getting a shot at the WWF title at WrestleMania, have always worked well. But the King of the Ring tournament turns out to be a high-stakes event some years, while other years it doesn't. Take the original Survivor Series five-on-five format. It worked great this year, when the WWF took on the Alliance. But other years, it doesn't really apply to what's happening. McMahon may decide to have champion vs. champion matches some years, but skip it some years when it doesn't relate to the storylines."

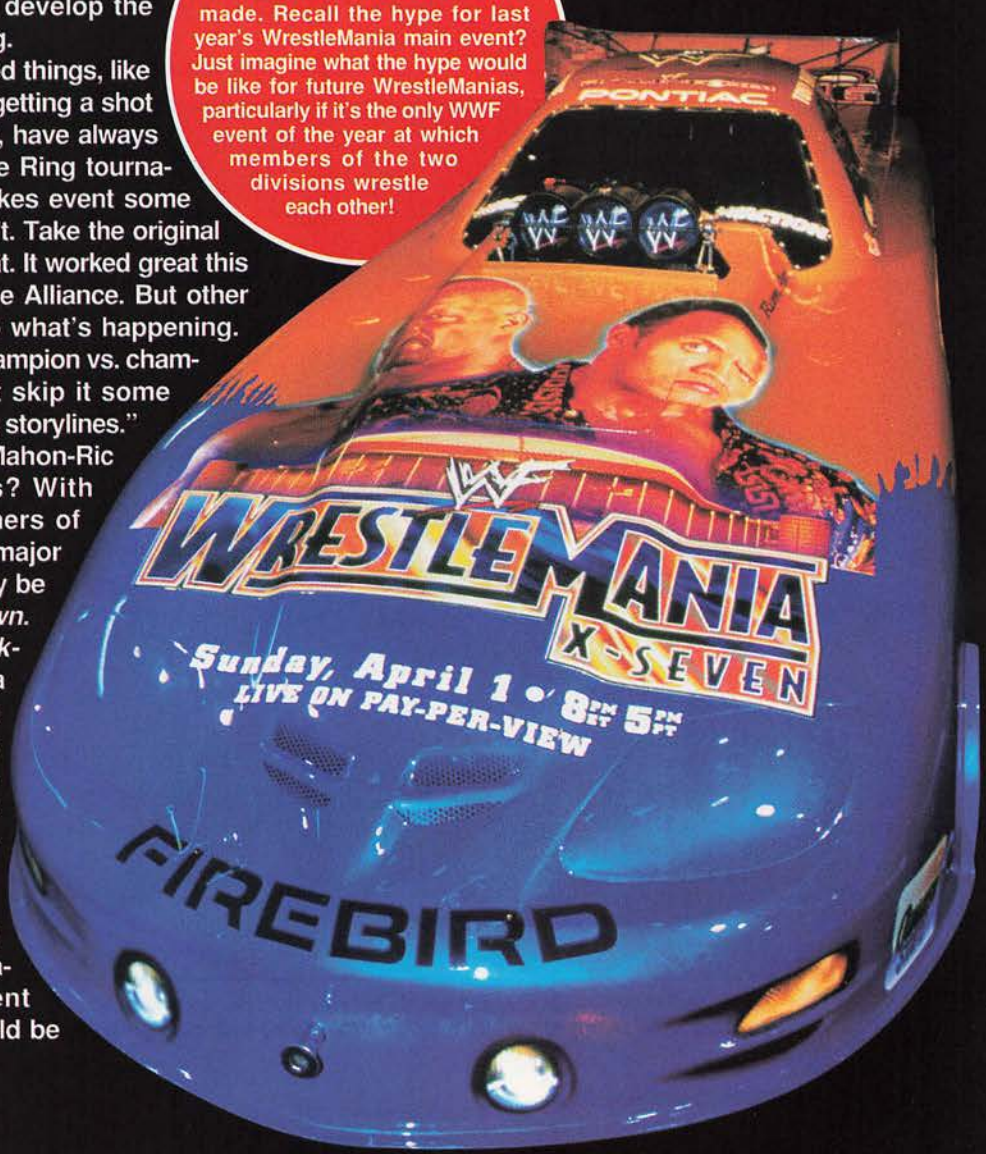
And how does the Vince McMahon-Ric Flair dynamic fit into all this? With McMahon and Flair as co-owners of the WWF, the stage is set for a major split. McMahon's promotion may be more appropriate for *Smackdown*. As a network program, *Smackdown* is more dependent on a mainstream audience. The McMahon family soap opera—with Vince, Linda, Shane, and Stephanie—would attract more casual viewers, which is important to UPN.

Because Ric Flair is so closely identified with WCW and the NWA, both of which emphasized sport over entertainment during their peak years, he would be a natural leader on *Raw*. Cable-television caters to more of a niche audience, making TNN the best home for this kind of show. Remember, TNN was satisfied with its XFL ratings for quite some time.

There is also the issue of the undisputed, or soon-to-be disputed, champion. Chris Jericho is billed as the undisputed WWF champion, not the undisputed World champion. That could mean the WWF champion will be the dominant champion, with each of the two promotions having their own titleholders. Or the fact that Jericho is still carrying two title belts could indicate there will be two disputed championships of equal value.

One thing we know from experience: We mustn't judge the success or failure of the WWF's latest venture at WrestleMania X-8. By WrestleMania X-9, however, the industry will have the verdict. □

Imagine if splitting the WWF into two divisions turns out to be the best move Vince McMahon ever made. Recall the hype for last year's WrestleMania main event? Just imagine what the hype would be like for future WrestleManias, particularly if it's the only WWF event of the year at which members of the two divisions wrestle each other!



the business page

By Harry Burkett

The WWF goes global ... While WWF television and merchandising has an international reach, it's still a significant event when the Federation embarks on a worldwide tour. The WWF announced Asia's "Smackdown" tour would begin on March 1 at the Yokohama Arena in Tokyo, continue on March 3 at Singapore's Indoor Stadium, and conclude on March 4 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. More dates could be added. Total Sports Asia was to coordinate the tour.

The WWF will hold three house shows in the United Kingdom and Germany to correspond with the May 4 Insurrextion pay-per-view at London's Wembley Arena. An Australian tour is scheduled for the summer, while a second U.K. tour is set for the fall.

Said Roger Marment, the WWF executive vice president of international business development: "Through our international television partners, the World Wrestling Federation has built a strong foundation for further global expansion. Live-event touring is the next logical step."

The establishment of a London office to coordinate international business is already in the works.

Boffo over the Poffos ... Randy Savage continued his campaign to goad Hulk Hogan into a charity match for the All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg. Savage addressed the issue in a feature story on the Poffo family, which appeared in the *St. Petersburg Times.*

Referring to Hogan, Savage said, "He was on the radio this morning jawing about it, but he hasn't accepted yet. I don't know why he wouldn't jump on this thing. We don't have to like each other—this is for the kids!" (Savage ended up donating money to the hospital in Hogan's name.)

In the story, it was revealed that Savage had renovated the workout facility for St. Petersburg's Admiral Farragut Academy, in honor of his 74-year-old father, Angelo Poffo, who has done work on behalf of the institution. He paid for all new weight machines and weights and donated the old equipment to charity.

Okay, so Randy Savage couldn't get his old rival Hulk Hogan to take him on in a match for charity this winter. That hasn't stopped the "Macho Man" from doing a lot more good deeds in his home state of Florida.

The facility was renamed "The Angelo Poffo Powerhouse Gym" in a recent ceremony. The Academy hung a large Ripley's Believe It Or Not depiction of Poffo performing 6,033 situps on July 4, 1945—setting the world record for the most situps in the shortest time.

"Randy was just determined to do something for his dad while his dad was still able to enjoy the recognition," said local DJ Dave McKay, who hosted the event. "When Randy makes up his mind to do something, there's no stopping him."

In light of his work for All Children's Hospital and his contribution to the Farragut Academy, there may be no stopping Savage from receiving a good citizen award in St. Petersburg!

Jersey All Pro show no go ... The biggest show in the history of Jersey All Pro Wrestling had been planned for January 19 at Woodbury High School in New Jersey, but the local school board cancelled the event, despite a signed contract. The show was to feature Eddie Guerrero, Low-Ki, Crowbar, The Hit Squad, and others.

Promoter Ray Sager said the Woodbridge Township School Board had been paid on December 10, 2001, for use of the facility, with some of the proceeds going to the school wrestling team and prom committee. Sager claims Jersey All Pro spent considerable time and money promoting the event between December 10 and January 4, the date when the school board reversed its decision.

According to Sager, Acting Superintendent Vincent Smith cited Jersey All Pro's reputation for "extreme wrestling," which had been outlawed in New Jersey in 2000. Sager asserted that a rival promoter had probably called the school with false information to cause trouble. "I have a good idea who it may be," he said, "and I probably will find out down the road, as people in this business like to talk and like to brag, so eventually I look for it to get back to me in some way."

The XWF's first infomercial ... *Countdown To The XWF* aired in local markets to hype upcoming house shows in late-December. The 30-minute infomercial turned out to be a behind-the-scenes introduction to the XWF, rather than a straight wrestling show. That was a surprise, considering the two days of television tapings that took place at Orlando's Universal Studios in November.

Hosted by Gene Okerlund, the show highlighted newcomers such as The British Storm and Hail, along with veterans Jim Duggan, Curt Hennig, Greg Valentine, The Nasty Boys, and The Road Warriors. As if that nostalgia wasn't enough to impress modern-day fans, the show also featured Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley of Kiss, Alice Cooper, and Willie Nelson.

Who will be on the next infomercial? Paul Jones, along with The Captain and Tennille?

Eddie Guerrero has hit the independent circuit since being fired from the WWF, but one show on which he was scheduled to appear, a Jersey All Pro Wrestling event, was cancelled amid some controversy in January.

WWFE Stockwatch

(For the period of December 1-31)

30-Day High: 13.67 on December 6
30-Day Low: 11.82 on December 26
52-Week High: 22.00 on January 31, 2001
52-Week Low: 10.31 on September 17, 2001

The law firm of Lovell & Stuart filed a class-action lawsuit on December 5, on behalf of all investors who acquired WWFE stock between its initial sale date of October 18, 1999, and December 6, 2000. The case, Abraham Kassin vs. WWFE, is pending in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The suit alleges WWFE violated federal securities laws by not disclosing that several of the underwriters for its initial public offering—including Bear, Stearns, & Company, Merrill Lynch, and Credit Suisse First Boston Corporation—had allocated WWFE shares to customers at $17.00 per share on the condition they would purchase additional shares at progressively higher prices.

Lovell & Stuart suggests this practice, known as "laddering," boosted WWFE stock prices to artificially high levels. These investors gained large profits by selling their stock at these high levels, but they weren't allowed to keep the total windfalls. Lovell & Stuart alleges that portions of these profits were "kicked back" to WWFE's underwriter brokerage firms as secret commissions not revealed in its IPO.

WWFE issued a one-sentence response the following day: "Based on the assertions of the law firm of Lovell & Stuart, we categorically deny any wrongdoing."

TV breakdown

Week beginning November 26

Raw (TNN): 4.4

Analysis: Vince McMahon tried to expand his Kiss My Ass club by humiliating Steve Austin with a forced initiation. But Austin turned against McMahon and whipped him with his own belt. William Regal and other McMahon sympathizers came to the rescue and brawled with Austin into the crowd. The Undertaker then turned heel by forcing Jim Ross to kiss McMahon's butt. McMahon's overexposure was probably *Raw's* low point of the year.

Smackdown (UPN): 4.2

Analysis: McMahon attempted to continue his sick initiations by forcing Trish Stratus to drop to her knees, but he was interrupted by The Rock. The people's champ grabbed McMahon, whose pants were still dangling, and executed the Rock bottom. WWF champ Steve Austin beat William Regal in the strap match main event. Kurt Angle attacked Austin afterward; Edge made the rescue.

Excess (TNN): 0.7

Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.3

Week beginning December 3

Raw (TNN): 4.2

Analysis: A musical tribute to Steve Austin sparked a bit of controversy because it featured a clip of Owen Hart piledriving him at SummerSlam 1997, which initially caused Austin's neck problems. World champ The Rock and women's champion Trish Stratus defeated Kurt Angle and Vince McMahon in the main event. As part of a prematch stipulation, McMahon would have to pucker up and kiss The Rock's butt on *Smackdown*.

Smackdown (UPN): 4.2

Analysis: Plenty of female fans hoped to catch a glimpse of The Rock's posterior on this night. The Rock teased that he would force McMahon to kiss Jim Ross' butt. To the male fans' delight, and McMahon's, Rock said the WWF chairman would have to kiss Trish Stratus' behind instead. Both turned out to be ploys, however, as Rock invited the returning Rikishi to receive the honors ... and McMahon got the most vile stinkface ever.

Excess (TNN): 0.7

Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.2

Week beginning December 10

Raw (TNN): 4.7

Analysis: *Raw*'s overall rating jumped a half-point, as viewers tuned in to witness the fallout of Vengeance, and the crowning of the industry's first undisputed world champion in 40 years. Co-owner Ric Flair presented Chris Jericho with the WWF and World (formerly WCW) title belts. Booker T solidified his new alliance with Vince McMahon and helped Jericho retain his undisputed title against Steve Austin inside a steel cage.

Smackdown (UPN): 3.6

Analysis: *Smackdown*'s nosedive in the ratings didn't bode well for the WWF's storylines following Vengeance. Steve Austin attacked Booker T with beer, frozen pizzas, and flour in a supermarket brawl, one of the funniest segments in a long time. Rob Van Dam scored a pinfall victory over the undisputed champion when he teamed with The Rock to defeat Jericho and The Undertaker.

Excess (TNN): 0.8

Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.2

Week beginning December 17

Raw (TNN): 4.0

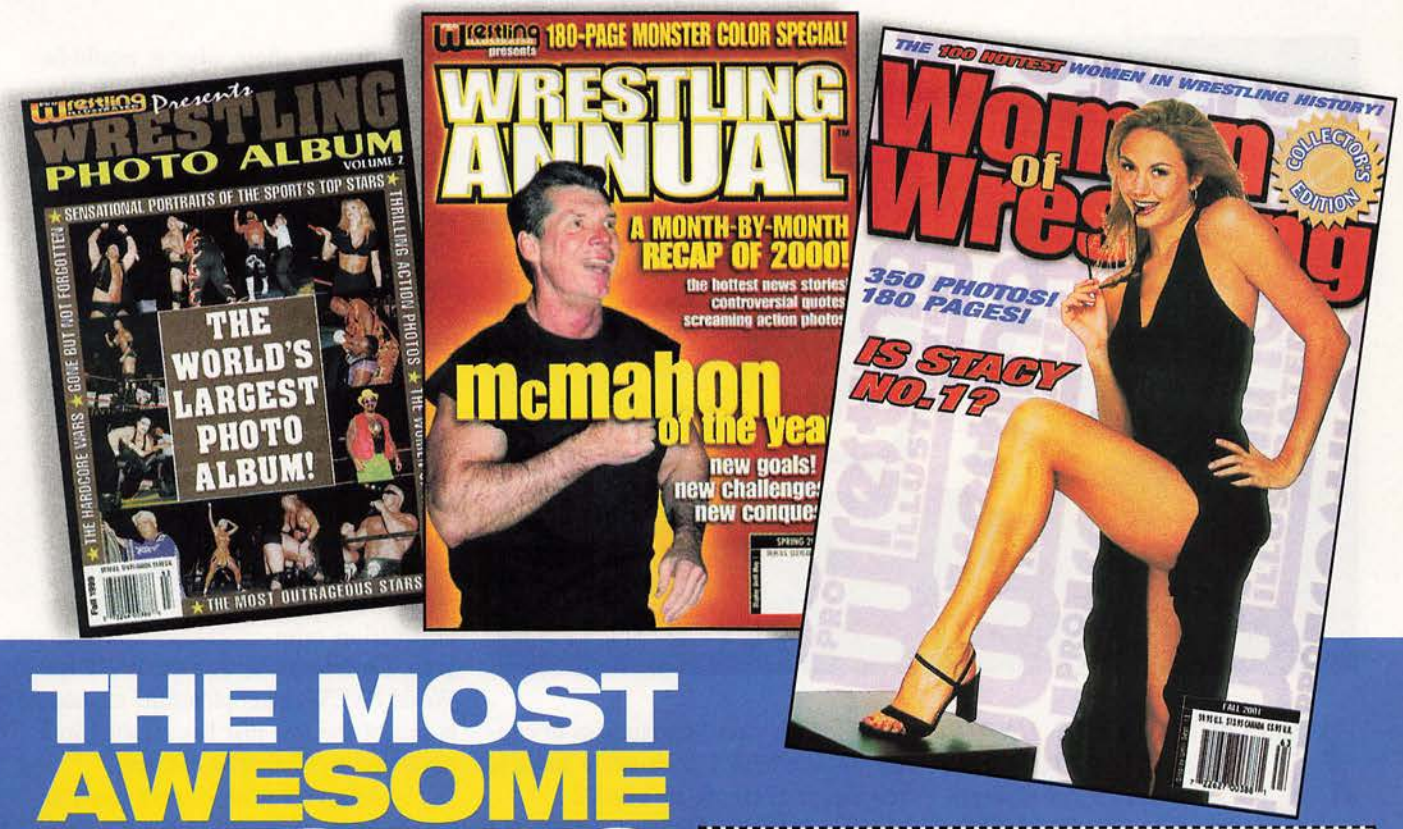
Analysis: *Raw*'s numbers dropped to its lowest levels in six weeks, possibly indicating a lack of enthusiasm for Chris Jericho as undisputed champion and Austin-McMahon II. Steve Austin's pursuit of Booker T continued in a Catholic church and featured vignettes that were questionable in taste. The night's highlight: Rob Van Dam and Ric Flair trapping Jericho and Vince McMahon in double figure-four leglocks. *Whooooooo!*

Smackdown (UPN): 3.8

Analysis: The fans wanted Triple-H, but they got Big Bossman, who returned to Smackdown this week. Bossman interfered by bloodying Austin with a steel chair during his first-blood match against Booker T. Referee Earl Hebner declared Booker the winner. The Rock celebrated the season with a few verbal smackdowns of Test and a personalized rendition of "The 12 Days Of Christmas." Was that five people's elbows?

Excess (TNN): 0.8

Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.1



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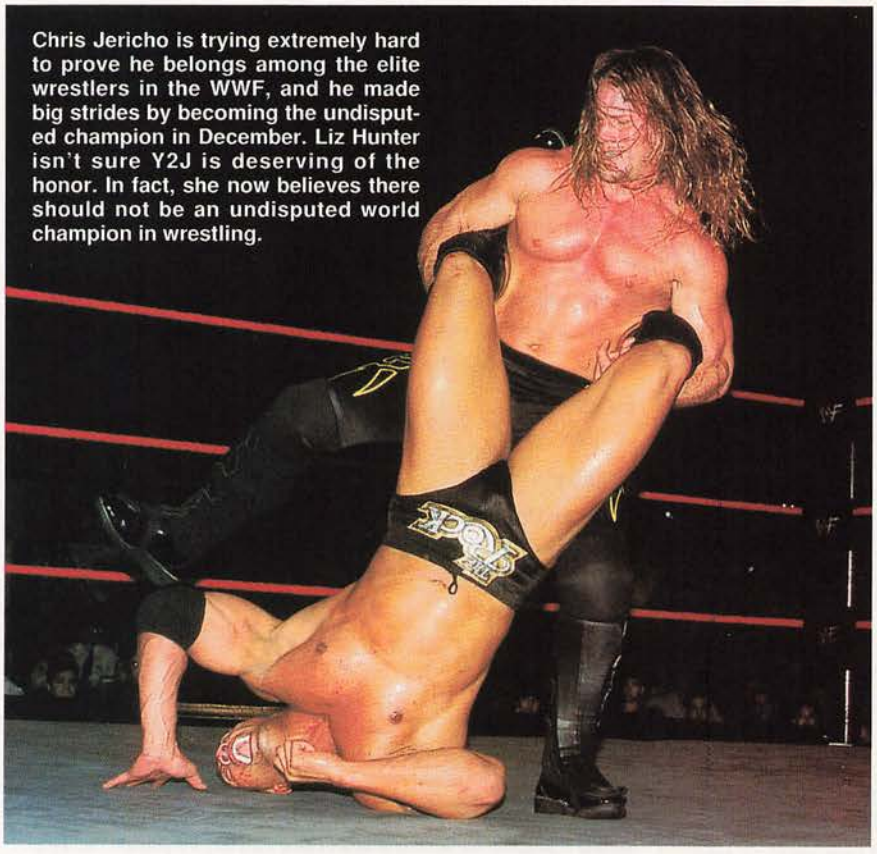
the steel cage

By Liz Hunter

DISPUTING THE UNDISPUTED CHAMPION. Fans had clamored for one undisputed world champion for decades. For most of my life, three world champions reigned supreme, with the WWF, the NWA/WCW, the AWA, and ECW being officially recognized as the major leagues at various times. It took 100 years for the wrestling business to consolidate, which I consider a natural process, and here we are in 2002.

And Vince McMahon means to tell me that after decades upon decades of innovation and evolution, our first unified and undisputed champion is Chris Jericho? After 20 years of writing and thinking about wrestling, literally having daydreams about what it would be like to have one world champion, I'm supposed to believe Y2J is the unification messiah?



Chris Jericho is trying extremely hard to prove he belongs among the elite wrestlers in the WWF, and he made big strides by becoming the undisputed champion in December. Liz Hunter isn't sure Y2J is deserving of the honor. In fact, she now believes there should not be an undisputed world champion in wrestling.

Many editors and writers have passed through *PWI* over the past two decades, but there wasn't a single one who didn't give his or her opinion on the one world champ debate. Indeed, how many of our magazine covers have hyped a potential unification bout or analyzed dream matches between the greatest champions?

Several unification matches occurred in the past. Conveniently, those matches ended in draws, countouts, or disqualifications, allowing promoters with the respective federations to save face. The unification mini-tournament at Vengeance in December, with the WWF and World (WCW) championships at stake, is one of the few that has resulted in a significant and definitive outcome.

Somehow, I wish it were possible for me to beam myself to our old Freeport, Long Island, office, circa 1980, and inform my colleagues that having one world champion, well, reeks. Nearly all the staffers, me included, had lobbied for one world champion.

There was one exception: Associate Editor Gary Morgenstein. Here's what he wrote in the January 1981 issue of *Inside Wrestling* following a unification stalemate between WWF World champion Bob Backlund and NWA World champion Harley Race at Madison Square Garden, back when I was much younger, a pound or two lighter, and a lot less wiser than I am today. "Simply, there are far too many talented wrestlers to narrow the field to just one champion ... And what of tradition, that consuming, pulsing artery of wrestling? How could the decades of championships in each federation suddenly be tossed aside, a mockery to the memory of those wonderful wrestlers who gave their all to the sport. One league would do just that."

Gary, wherever you are, you were absolutely right. You were just two decades ahead of your time. If the WWF goes ahead and splits into two promotions (which I'm figuring it will have done by the time you read this column), that will prove Vince McMahon agrees with us.

Chief Jay Strongbow's act probably wouldn't go over too well in today's WWF. It was a hit in the 1970s and early-1980s, though. Liz has an unusual plan for putting old WWF footage featuring guys like the Chief to good use today.

THE 2001 STORIES TO FORGET. Speaking of writing and thinking about wrestling, there were the seemingly never-ending stories I became sick and tired of writing and thinking about last year. I hope you've forgotten them already. I wish I could.

They include Eric Bischoff's repeated attempts to spearhead deals to buy WCW. One day it was going to happen, the next day it wasn't, and the day after that, the odds were about 50/50. Another would be how *WCW Monday Nitro* gained two-tenths of a ratings point on *WWF Raw Is War,* which was already ahead a full three points. Stories relating to Vince Russo consulting with other promotions in 2001, including Women of Wrestling and World Wrestling All-Stars, grew very tiresome very quickly for me.

Hmmmmmm. What else caused me headaches? Every time I heard about Kevin Nash talking about how he enjoyed collecting fat paychecks for doing very little or nothing, and every time I heard about Scott Hall acting "straight and sober" again.

Funny, but I guess just about all of my bad memories had something to do with WCW. That's because I once had a lot of respect for that company—and I have little tolerance for the egomaniacs responsible for its unnecessary demise.

MARKETING MEMO. Older fans are becoming nostalgic about the 1970s and early-1980s. They're missing the good ol' days more than ever and want tapes of the old WWF *Championship Wrestling* program or footage of classic matches. The WWF has produced videos for more than 15 years, but it has yet to compile such a tape. Now that the WWF owns the WCW video library, and might ultimately own the ECW library, the possibilities seem to be limitless.

I don't understand the reluctance. Do the marketing suits think old matches would be snoozers for current fans? Or do they want to devote all of their resources to hyping today's stars?

Smackdown Records could add a modern twist to old footage. Their mixers could put Chief Jay Strongbow's war dance to music with a track from the *Aggression* CD. What about Method Man doing Tony Garea? I'd buy that kind of stuff for sure.

(Liz Hunter can be reached via e-mail at superstarlizh@yahoo.com) □

strange list of the month

FIVE IDEAS THE XWF COULD BORROW FROM THE XFL

1. Sign a wrestler named "He Hate Hogan"
2. Get Jesse Ventura to "talk up" the product
3. Hire football announcers to call matches
4. Make Vince McMahon lose a ton of money
5. Talk Dick Ebersol into taking half the loss

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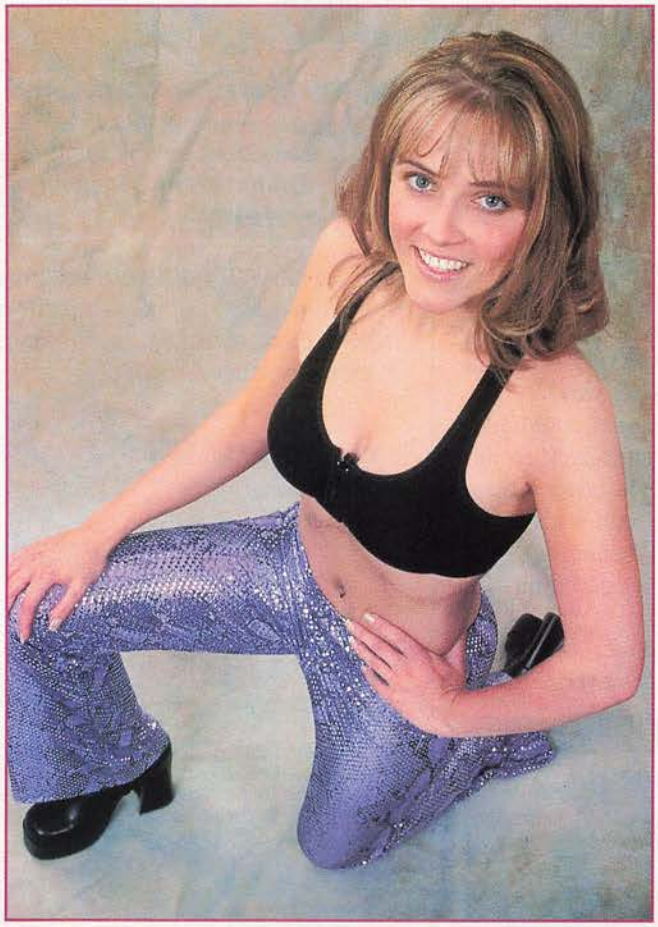
win lose or draw

By Harry Burkett



There definitely is a natural beauty to Candie, a popular Maryland Championship Wrestling diva. Maybe that was what caught the attention of the people setting up the tryouts for *Tough Enough 2*. Candie didn't make it to the round of 25, but just getting to show her stuff in front of Ivory and the show's other trainers made for a special experience.

TERROR AND EXCITEMENT, along with the physical hardship of enduring a very long day with very little to eat, caused Candie to feel a sick anxiety as she waited in the on-deck circle. Her day began at 7 a.m. and it was now 7:30 p.m. Al Snow had told the contestants what would be expected at their tryouts. But that was more than 10 hours ago, and Candie had replayed and replayed Snow's pep talk in her mind.

Snow said he and his fellow trainers would guide the contestants along, so it wasn't really necessary for Candie to memorize his briefing. Sometimes it's better to know nothing than to know just a little something. Contestants weren't able to see each other's tryouts. Only a line of three was allowed in the same room as the ring. Even as the second person in line, Candie could only see what the other contestant was doing; it was impossible to discern what the trainers were saying.

Finally she got the signal. As Candie walked toward the ring, she noted WWF producer Kevin Dunn and, *hmmmmmm*, there was the guy who looks like Vader, *Tough Enough 2* producer John "Big" Gaburick. She also made out the figures of Snow, Hardcore Holly, Chavo Guerrero Jr., and Ivory. The butterflies fluttered in her stomach. Ivory. She was not only a major reason why Candie was in Las Vegas that day, but she was a pioneer, one of the women who inspired her to get into the business in the first place.

The image of Elizabeth wearing a fancy lace dress flashed in Candie's mind. She remembered Grandma waking her just in time for *Saturday Night's Main Event.* She remembered her first interview with Maryland Championship Wrestling, the first time she choked someone on the ropes as a valet, and her first actual wrestling match. She remembered the cramped high school locker rooms, as well as the hot, jam-packed venues of the indy circuit. Everything, from her childhood daydreams to her professional ambitions, built to this moment.

Candie felt uneasy. She had stood idle and nervous for nearly 12 hours, and now had to summon a five-minute adrenaline rush. Why couldn't her greatest opportunity for success happen when she was at her best? The trainers had a long day, too. Would they be tired and cranky? After all, Candie had seen more than one contestant leave the tryouts in tears. Had the trainers even had dinner yet?

I'm dying to work with you people, Candie thought. *But I'm not supposed to let on that I'm nervous. I'm not breathing, my heart's beating a mile a minute, and you people want me to think about wrestling?!*

Many of the female contestants had spent hours on their hair and makeup. Candie went with a natural look, reasoning this would be her look at the training facility if she went through the 13 weeks of *Tough Enough. I won't worry about fancy hair and makeup if they're beating me up six hours a day ...*

Showtime. Someone asked her name, where she

So maybe Candie will never make it to the WWF. Most of those who toil in the independents don't. The fact that she didn't get selected for *Tough Enough 2* didn't change the high opinions her comrades in MCW have of her. And she still enjoys tussling with her rivals in the company, including Tara.

was from, and her age. Kevin Dunn asked if she had many independent matches. Actually, she had wrestled in only 10 matches, not counting plenty of run-ins. She didn't know if her professional experience would work for her or against her.

They asked for a 30-second promo. Candie could do the promo in character, or simply state why she deserved to be there. She did a combination of both. "I know how excited everyone is to be a part of this," she said, "and while I'm not so muscular or dressed to the tens, I'm bringing something the other 249 contestants don't have ... and that's heart. And that's something you might not necessarily see if you judge this book by its cover!"

By this time, the trainers had proven to be quite nice, and nodded affirmatively to Candie's effort. The positive body language calmed her. When asked to do a nastier promo, Candie criticized "girls with big boobs" and the WWF's "T & A show."

Al Snow laughed. He asked Candie if she'd be willing to get a boob job if the WWF requested it. "Absolutely," she replied. "You've got to fight gravity somehow." The entire group chuckled, impressed with Candie's uncompromising honesty.

Then came the physical part. Two heavy punching bags had been laid in the ring. The trainers instructed Candie to run the ropes, jumping between the bags in the middle as she went back and forth. After one minute of that drill, she was prompted to drop between the two bags, do 10 clap pushups (women could use their knees), roll on her back, and do a kip-up. The trainers chatted with Candie for a moment and thanked her for trying out.

The following day, Candie learned she was not among the final 25 listed for the Las Vegas auditions.

"I'm not sure why I didn't make the cut," she reflected to me. "Ivory showed some concern whether I could be a 'mean girl,' the girl that everyone hates. I don't know why I can't be that girl. The 'mean girl' and I just don't get along. Another trainer said I looked very small. Also, I heard a rumor that the MTV producers ultimately decided it wasn't fair for people with professional experience to be in the same competition as amateurs. I was probably too competent in some areas, and might have fallen short in others."

Candie shouldn't feel too depressed. The fact that she was among the 250 out of 5,000 applicants selected for tryouts gives her a special feeling.

"I just appreciated the opportunity to be in Las Vegas and taking a shot," she said. "I had watched Ivory on GLOW when I was a kid, and here I had the chance to be only five feet from her. I would've loved to drink coffee with her and hear her stories, but I could have, potentially, worked alongside her. It's mind-boggling.

"If I decided to get out of the business tomorrow, I'd have the satisfaction of knowing that someone in the WWF office—if only for 10 seconds—was impressed enough to give me a chance. They wanted a better look for a reason. I'd love to know what they thought was special about me."

Candie didn't drown her sorrows in a Las Vegas cocktail lounge or at the slot machines. Candie told her younger brother, Martin, who had accompanied her on the trip, that she wanted to get back to Baltimore as soon as possible. An MCW show was scheduled for North Carrollton High School that Sunday, and she wanted to be in the corner of her long-time partner, "Sodapop" Ronnie Zukko. She left Las Vegas early and returned home.

After the North Carrollton show, Candie and the rest of the crew met at the MCW training facility. Corporal Punishment and Mark Shrader surprised her with a cake, complete with little ring ropes around it. There was a message written in icing: "You'll always be tough enough for us."

Suddenly, not being in the WWF wasn't such a disappointment anymore.

(Harry Burkett can be reached via e-mail at HBurkettJr@excite.com.) □

the straight shooter

By Dan Murphy

CONTRACTS INTIMIDATE me. I don't care whether we're talking about reading the fine print on a lease agreement or just filling out the application for a Blockbuster membership. Something about all that legalese rubs me the wrong way. I can read the words and understand what they mean, but I still feel like I might get screwed once I sign on the dotted line. And if that happens, I'll have no one to blame but myself.

Jim Cornette has never been in the business of blaming himself. He'd sooner fault the fickle gods of wrestling than acknowledge he made a mistake. Over the years, he's also proven himself to be quite adept at negotiating the contracts he wants, like the time he—as Yokozuna's adviser—snuck in the stipulation that Yoko's SummerSlam 1993 WWF World title defense against Lex Luger was to be Luger's one and only shot at the belt.

I've always hoped that I'll have Cornette on hand to help me negotiate a mortgage loan. Not only would I get the loan at zero percent interest, he'd finagle a way to make the bank kick in for maid service, too. I'm talking about leggy-French-maids-in-mini-skirts-type maid service.

Unfortunately, Cornette's mastery of the loophole has been closed.

Now, I've never signed a contract with a wrestling promotion. Never seen one of those contracts, actually. But I think if I did, even I wouldn't be able to miss little details like "lifetime contract" and "25 percent ownership" of the promotion. Those are big phrases to overlook. But Cornette somehow did.

Here's the situation in Ohio Valley Wrestling. Last year, a massive heel in a leather bondage mask by the name of The Machine began making life miserable for the fan favorites. The Machine was exposed as Doug Basham, a talented young wrestler who just happened to be the nephew of OVW owner Danny Davis.

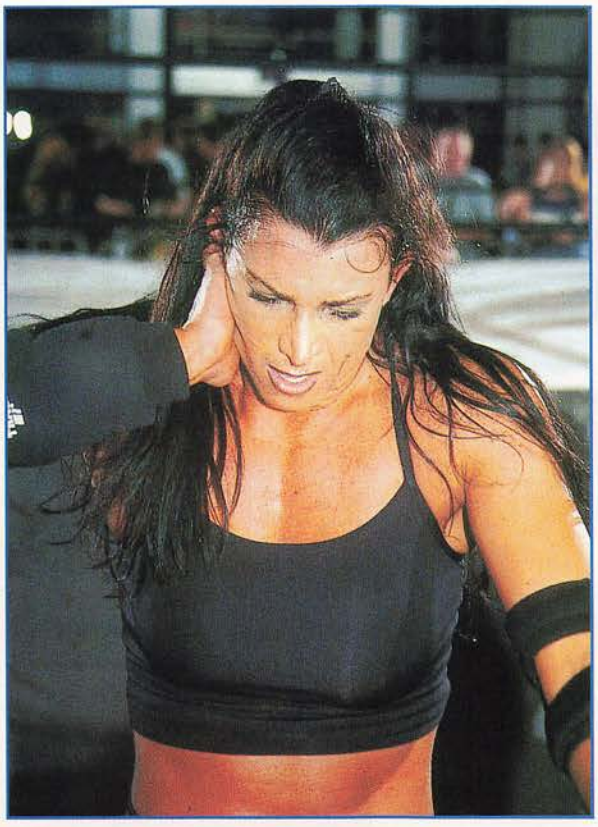
Basham formed a heel stable called The Revolution and set out to take over the company. He managed to win the OVW title and unveiled the beautiful Victoria as the "Queen" of The Revolution.

Basham antagonized Cornette and

If you're planning to dominate any wrestling promotion, it helps to be a versatile and aggressive wrestler, and Doug Basham (a.k.a. The Machine) has been that in OVW. Just ask Nick Dinsmore. And any man who can hatch a scheme and outsmart Jim Cornette has to be considered dangerous.

Davis at every turn, and Cornette finally declared he would fire Basham the moment he dropped the OVW title. The problem is, Basham is one hell of a wrestler. He's a true monster—a power wrestler who can go hold-for-hold with "Mr. Wrestling" of OVW himself, Nick Dinsmore. He also oozes charisma, and with Queen Victoria at his side—well, he's just so damn good that you *have* to boo him.

After Basham dispatched everyone Cornette sent after him, Cornette got desperate. He made a deal with manager Synn and signed a match between Basham and Synn's "Demon Of The Deep," Leviathan. Now, if you haven't seen Leviathan, picture a cross beween Scott Steiner and Bill Goldberg, then add more muscle.



Queen Victoria has been instrumental in the success of Basham and the rest of his underhanded Revolution. The woman is beautiful, cunning, and she can wrestle. She has also made Dan Murphy forget about that WWF diva with the protruding thongs. What was her name again?

Anyway, Basham lost the belt and Cornette gleefully handed him his walking papers. That's when Basham announced he had a little secret. Apparently, Uncle Danny had been rather generous with the contract he offered Basham. Not only does Basham have a clause stating he can't be fired—he also owns 25 percent of the company. Apparently, everyone managed to overlook that one.

Both Cornette and Davis have vowed to find a way to run Basham out of OVW and wipe out The Revolution, but Basham is laughing very loudly as he cashes his big paychecks.

Some of the fans down in Kentuckiana are still screaming about this. They absolutely despise the condescending Basham, Victoria, and fellow Revolutionaries Big Bad John and Spade. One irate woman recently tried to climb over the barrier and attack Victoria. I, on the other hand, say congratulations to The Revolution.

The Machine has been about as dominant a heel in OVW as Triple-H was in the WWF throughout 2000. Just like Triple-H, he managed to foil management, take the gold, *and* take the girl. Leviathan may have the OVW title, but he's a marked man (or animal or demon ... or whatever the hell he is). Let him wear the belt—Basham's trying to gain control of the whole promotion.

"We *will* take over OVW—there's no doubt about that," Victoria told me. "Cornette and Davis think they can run us out of here. When will they learn that no one can stop The Machine? He just keeps going and going and going.

"Believe me," she giggled, "I know."

One thing about interviewing Victoria: When you're done, you feel compelled to take a cold shower.

Another thing about interviewing Victoria: She might be the most honest person in wrestling. She is convinced that Basham will regain the OVW title and somehow wrest control of the company from Cornette and Davis. She also intimated that The Revolution has some more tricks planned.

"A Revolution never rests. It's never predictable," she said. "We're going to be major pains in the butt for Jimmy and Uncle Danny, and I could tell you how, but not today. Victoria always keeps her secrets."

Good for Victoria, and good for Basham. The Revolution has flauted the rules and talked the talk, but they've been able to back up every one of their boasts. They are constantly training and developing new moves. It won't be long before Victoria becomes one of the top women wrestlers in the business (i.e. the WWF), and Basham is just—well, okay, I'll write it, a machine. Now they've even been able to dupe Cornette on his own turf—in the boardroom. And Cornette only has himself to blame.

Cancel my membership in the Lita fan club. I'm joining The Revolution! ☐

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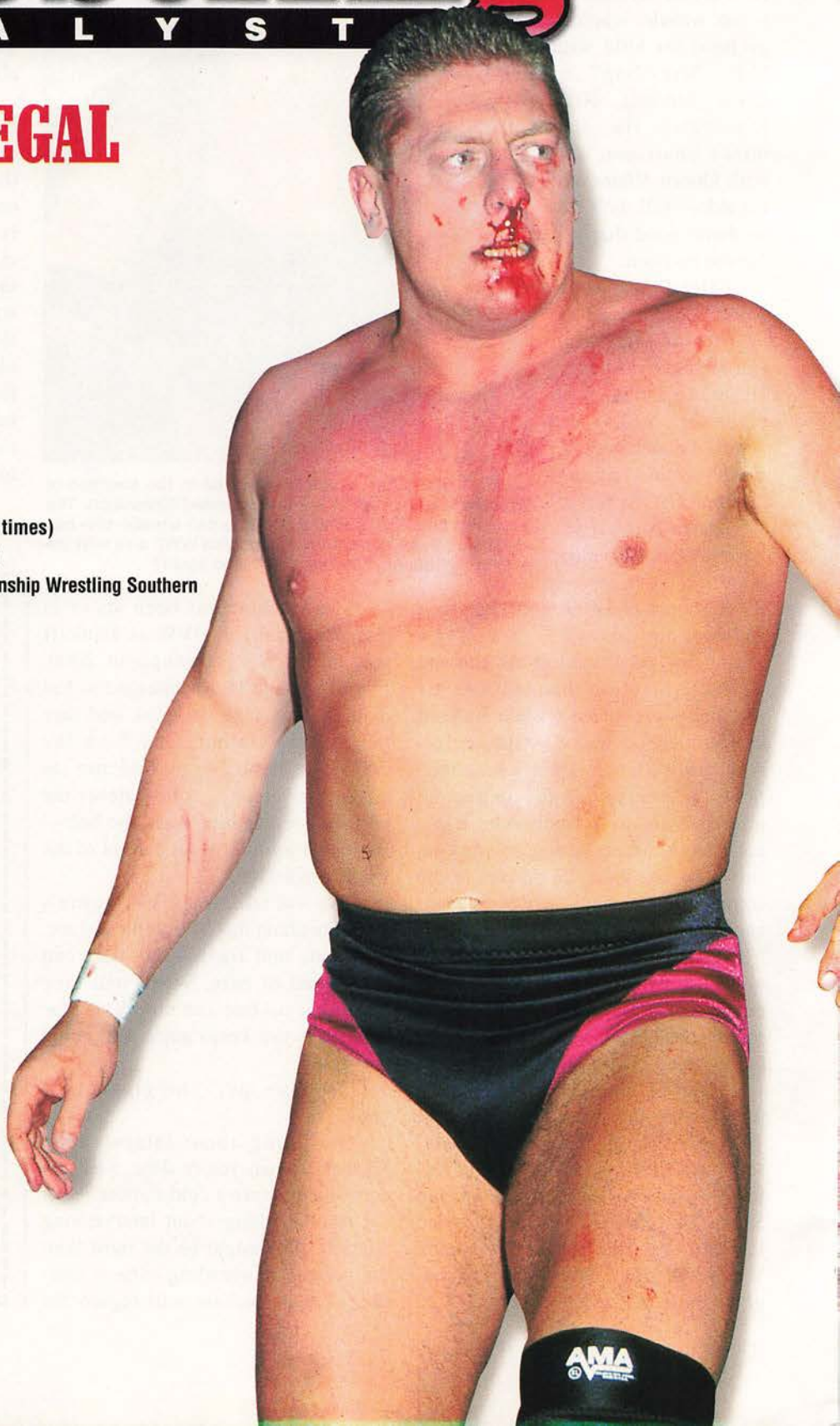
THE Wrestling ANALYST

WILLIAM REGAL

Years Pro: 15
Size: 6'4", 257
"*PWI* 500" Listings: 2001—61
2000—222
1999—223
1998—188
1997—80
1996—56
1995—36
1994—18
1993—71
Titles: WWF European (2 times)
WCW TV (4 times)
Memphis Championship Wrestling Southern
***PWI* Awards:** None



THE NUMBERS

Offense (9.0): Regal is much too plodding for WWF television, which limits his potential for main-event status. He should choose two or three signature maneuvers from his vast arsenal, as The Rock utilizes the Samoan drop, DDT, and people's elbow, or Arn Anderson used the spinebuster and DDT. Fans become more involved if they can anticipate certain moves, especially if they are crisply executed, high-impact moves.

Defense (10.0): In the WWF, the British star is second only to Kurt Angle in terms of defensive capabilities. Because defensive skills are often emphasized over offensive skills in Europe, Regal learned how to exploit his opponents' weaknesses and counter their favorite holds early in his career. Regal is most effective when the action remains center-ring, where he can best utilize those unorthodox counterholds.

Experience (10.0): Regal began his professional career at age 21, which might have been old for a rookie in 1960, but was relatively young for a rookie in 1986. After mastering the technical grappling style in the U.K., he honed a stiffer offense in Japan. His international experience garnered him a position high on the card in WCW upon his 1993 arrival in America.

Conditioning (8.5): Aside from stars such as The Big Show and Rikishi, who use size as their primary weapons, Regal might have the least impressive physique in the WWF. That isn't as vicious a criticism as you might think, considering the WWF employs most of the best athletes in the business. And he looks much better than he did a few years ago, when serious substance abuse problems threatened his career. Still, Regal is in need of a gut check.

Science (10.0): The U.K.'s goodwill ambassador might be the greatest scientific wrestler in the industry today. To Kurt Angle's dismay, it's true, it's true. Angle's repertoire is based primarily on the amateur style. Angle doesn't have the same breadth of grappling experience in the professional ranks. Regal has three continents' worth.

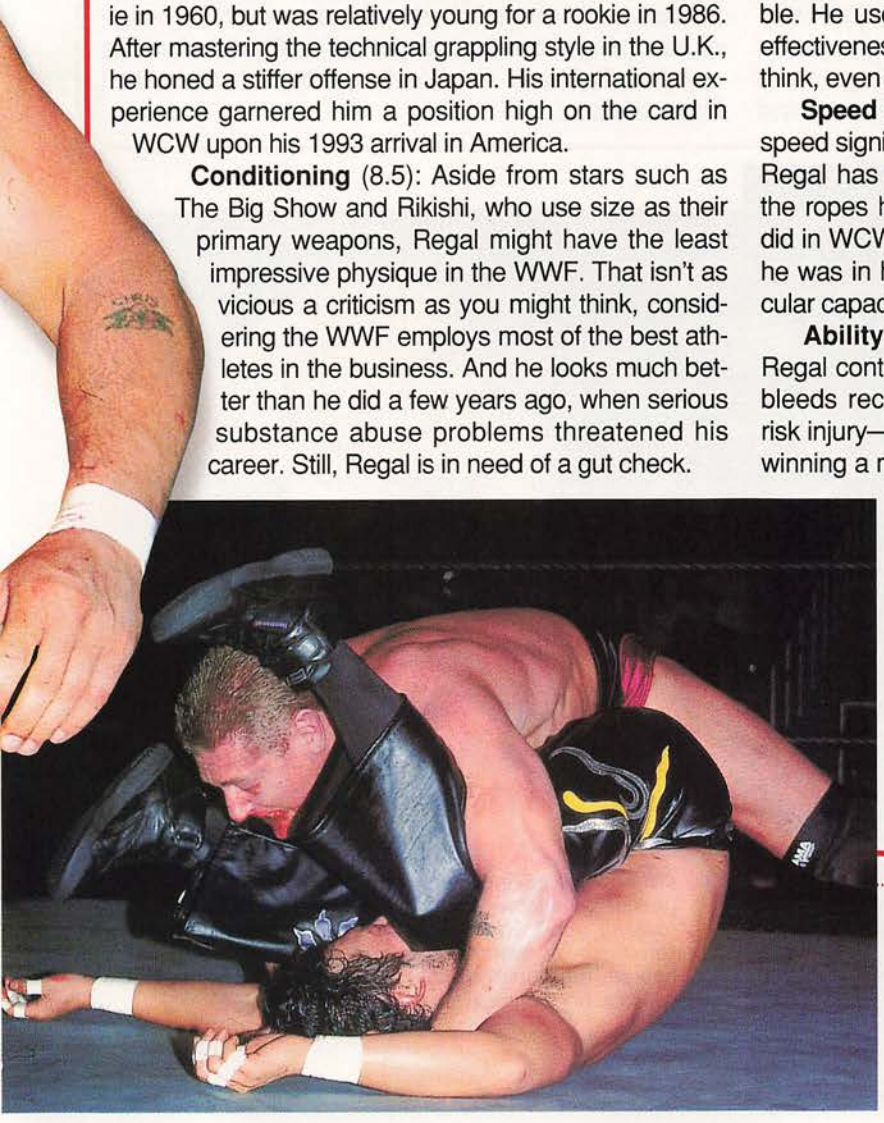
Stamina (8.0): Regal became accustomed to the round system in the U.K. and excelled as WCW TV champion because 10-minute bouts were his forte. He did extremely well against then-WCW champ Ric Flair in a series of five-minute matches in 1994. Regal's early training, in addition to his less-than-stellar physical conditioning, makes his endurance a bit of a weakness.

Power (8.5): He isn't at the absolute peak of physical fitness like many of his peers, including Angle, The Rock, Triple-H, and Chris Jericho. But Regal's height and reach advantages, along with his knowledge of leverage, make his distribution of power quite formidable. He uses the double-underhook suplex with great effectiveness. And his punch is a lot harder than you'd think, even when he isn't using brass knuckles.

Speed (8.0): It's tough for a wrestler to improve his speed significantly 15 years into his career. That is what Regal has been forced to do, though. Regal is hitting the ropes harder and bouncing off faster than he ever did in WCW. While Regal is a few pounds heavier than he was in his WCW heyday, his speed and cardiovascular capacity are better than they were two years ago.

Ability To Absorb Punishment (8.0): Although Regal continued wrestling through several nasty nosebleeds recently, he isn't known for his willingness to risk injury—even relatively minor injury—for the sake of winning a match. He has the mentality that wrestling is a sport, and tapping out is just part of the game, even if you are a tough man.

Quality Of Opposition (9.0): Strictly speaking, the quality of Regal's opposition is quite high, considering his matches against Chris Jericho, The Rock, and Steve Austin during the past year. The quantity of these matches is the problem. Regal served as an upper-class Big Bossman for the McMahons in 2001, more of a mercenary than a full-time competitor.



① **Very few wrestlers would be advised to try to outwrestle William Regal on the mat. He's just too good, too clever, and too devious in that area. Even someone like Tajiri, who's younger, quicker, and knows him so well, learned some tough lessons when he tried that.**

THE ANALYSIS

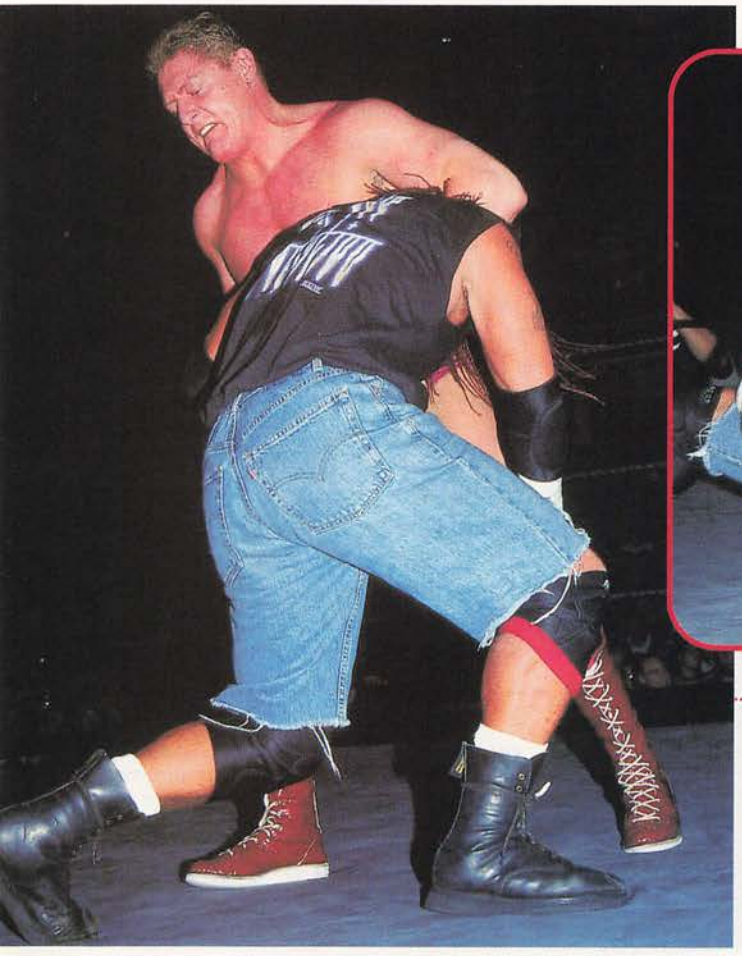
Repertoire: His European uppercuts are similar to those of Dory Funk Jr. Regal's 6'4" frame enables him to deliver the blows with more power, however. He has been using his Union Jack neckbreaker less over the past few months, opting for the Regal stretch (a version of the STF) as a finisher instead. Kurt Angle's anklelock and Chris Benoit's crossface have helped submission finishers come back in style, and Regal's stretch enhances his reputation as a shooter.

Strengths: Regal's methodical approach, based on the fundamentals of wrestling, allows him to combat any style. He fared well against the versatile Ric Flair in 1994, thwarted high-flyer Rey Misterio Jr. in 1997, and survived the brawling/sometimes scientific Steve Austin in 2001. From an entertainment standpoint, he is very natural with his snooty delivery in backstage vignettes. He's a more interesting companion for Tajiri than Torrie Wilson.

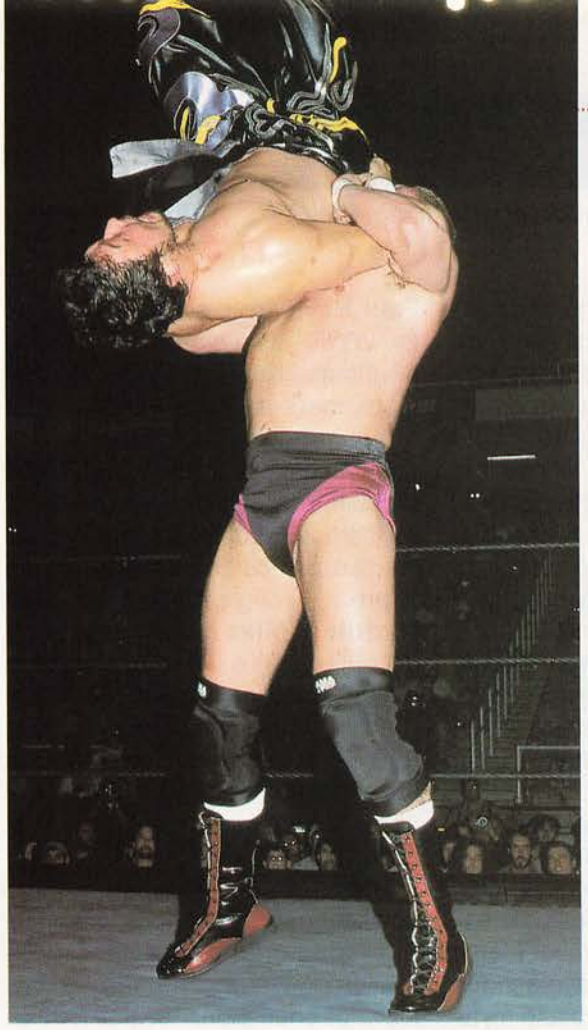
Weaknesses: The Blackpool, England, native fought his demons and won. His triple-digit "500" rankings from 1998 to 2000 represented the darkest period of his life. An addiction to painkillers forced Regal out of WCW, but the WWF allowed him to rehabilitate himself in Memphis. Recently, chronic nosebleeds prompted Regal to undergo nasal surgery. Dave Finlay broke Regal's nose at Uncensored 1996. It wasn't the last time that happened.

Defining Career Moment: How many wrestlers get a chance to dethrone a living legend who made his reputation by dethroning a living legend? *Huh?* Regal taunted WCW commentator Larry Zbyszko out of retirement for an intergenerational feud. Zbyszko defeated Regal for the TV title in May 1994, but Regal regained the belt six weeks later. It was the biggest victory of Regal's career to that date. A close runner-up would be his brilliant performance against Chris Benoit at the Brian Pillman Memorial Show in 2000. It showed everyone watching he was back in top form.

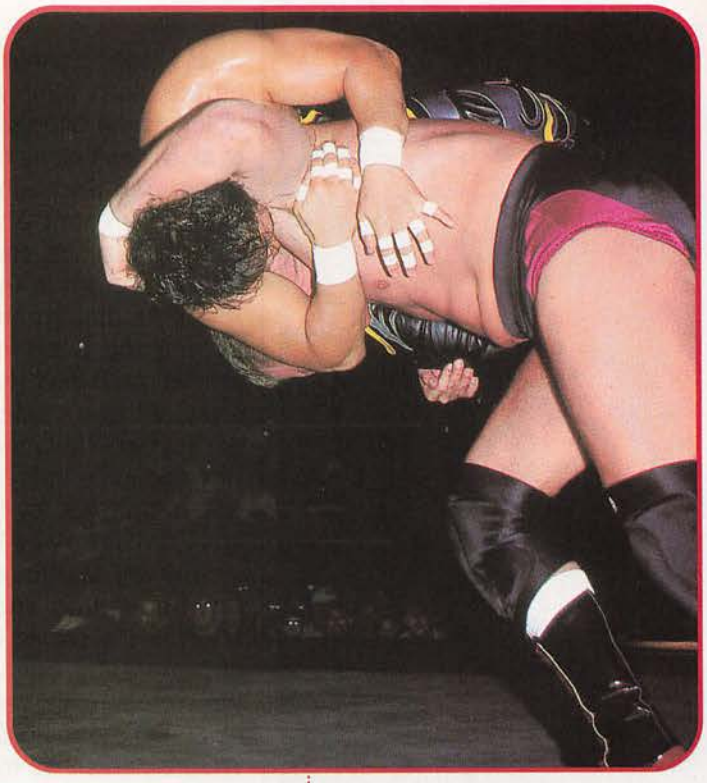
Future: Regal reached the height of his popularity last summer when he fought for the WWF against the Alliance. And, as Tajiri's adviser, he went from being a comic foil to a fan favorite in his own right. Even his princely wave earned cheers. Regal was on the verge of becoming a breakout superstar of 2001 before his split with Tajiri and his defection to the Alliance halted his momentum.



② **Generally speaking, Regal is a very methodical, very patient wrestler who cares more about winning than looking good. He'll try to wear down foes such as Raven slowly, even if that doesn't please the crowd. Of course, if the methodical approach doesn't work, he will lose his temper and start firing fists.**



③ Regal will employ a more power-oriented approach when taking on lighter opponents like his old protégé, Tajiri. That makes sense, but it's rare for him to use power bombs.



④ This is about as close to an aerial move as Regal gets—a Regal roll, a.k.a. somersault slam. It's hard for him to captivate crowds with his wrestling style because he does stick to the mat and doesn't use many exciting moves or holds.

⑤ Regal's intelligence and attention to detail are two big reasons why he has gotten as far as he has in this business. He spends a lot of time figuring out his rivals' tendencies and developing counters for their favorite moves and holds. He knows when Tajiri is most likely to deliver one of those stiff kicks and exactly how to counter it.

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ringside

(Continued from page 13)

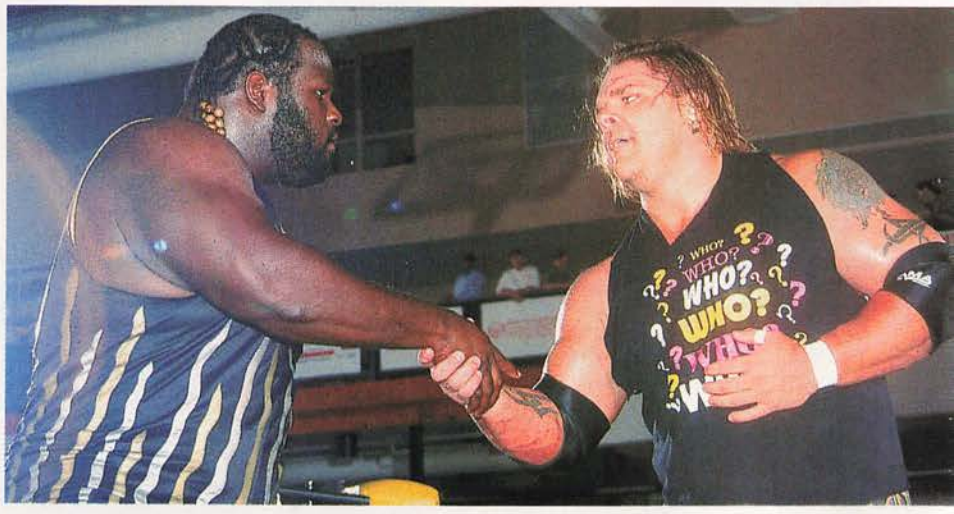
what wrestling should and shouldn't be (he didn't approve of hardcore violence), he often stood in the way of storylines that he considered controversial. Sometimes he would walk away from the set, while other times he'd simply shut the cameras off to keep them from recording. And if he thought that a heel was getting too over while cutting a promo, he'd pull the microphone away. Whalen's antics were said to particularly incense **Bruce Hart**, who had more than his share of storylines thwarted by Whalen's trickery. Ed Whalen was 74.

Harvey Martin, a four-time Pro Bowl selection and Super Bowl MVP for the Dallas Cowboys, died of pancreatic cancer at age 51. Wrestling fans will remember Martin as one of the football players in the WrestleMania 2 19-man battle royal. He and **Pedro Morales** eliminated each other in the early going.

Mark Henry has decided to take a few months off from wrestling in order to train for a World's Strongest Man competition. We wish him the best ... Word has it that **Ric Flair** is working on his autobiography. I can't wait to read it ...Yes, **Paul Heyman** is still employed by the WWF—as a member of the creative team. He's just not on TV anymore, that's all. **Mick Foley**, on the other hand, is no longer a Federation employee. Foley and **Vince McMahon** split amicably, however, so there is room for a return should the two parties be interested in the future ... Congratulations to **"Mac Daddie" Mike Anthony**, who defeated NWA Texas champion **Kevin Northcutt** to win the title. "Winning this belt means everything to me because the Texas belt is legendary," said Anthony. "It is about being part of a history that goes back for over half a century" ... A big round of applause also goes out to **Josh Daniels**, who won the Independent Wrestling Federation's two-day, 16-man tournament of champions. In the tournament's final match, Daniels defeated **Roman**, **Kevin Knight**, and **Damian Adams** in a fatal four-way to walk away with the championship.

Well, fans, that does it for me this month. Enjoy your wanderings.

(Will Welsh can be reached via e-mail at PWIRingside@home.com.) ☐



Hugh Morrus had a good idea of how strong Mark Henry was just from shaking his hand. We'll all have a better idea of how strong Henry is after he takes part in an upcoming World's Strongest Man competition.

the MEXICO REPORT

By Mike Spillane

If **Emilio Charles Jr.** thought he was having trouble winning the affections of the girl EMLL fans know as **Ana** before, he's going to have an even tougher time now that he's been shaved bald. EMLL closed out 2001 with a blockbuster pay-per-view from Arena Mexico in Mexico City, and both Charles and his opponent, **Shocker,** put their hair on the line when they collided in the main event.

For months, Ana, who could often be spotted sitting ringside at EMLL TV tapings, was the subject of some controversy. A number of EMLL wrestlers went out of their way try to get her attention. Eventually, the two wrestlers most obsessed with Ana clashed in a number of tag team and trios matches. It was never entirely clear if Ana was interested in either Charles or Shocker, and many of their attempts to impress the mysterious young lady went unacknowledged.

The feud between Shocker and Charles climaxed in the best-of-three-falls contest at EMLL's pay-per-view event. At first, it seemed like Shocker, who had recently lost his mask, would also suffer the humiliation of being shaved in the middle of the ring when he was disqualified for throwing a referee. However, the ringside commissioner ruled that the decision would not stand, and the match continued, with Shocker pinning Charles in the deciding fall.

The card also featured an incredible eight-man tag team match that pitted **Juventud Guerrera, Nicho El Millionario** (former WCW star **Psicosis**), **Halloween**, and **Damian** against the equally impressive *technico* team of **El Hijo del Santo**, **Negro Casas**, **Rey Misterio Jr.**, and **El Hijo de Rayo de Jalisco Jr**. A new feud seemed to be born when Juvi and Nicho centered their attacks on Santo and Casas. In the end, the *rudos* overwhelmed their opponents, and Juventud and Nicho helped their team win out at the expense of Casas and Santo, which seems to indicate that the two former WCW cruiserweight champions now have EMLL tag gold in mind.

El Hijo de Rayo de Jalisco Jr. has been wrestling with the familiar mask his grandfather donned, but is usually announced as **El Hombre Sin Nombre**, which means, literally, "the man with no name." A dispute between father (**Rayo de Jalisco Jr.**) and son (El Hijo) is behind the confusing names, and until it's resolved, it seems like the third man to wear the famed Rayo mask will do so without the benefit of his family's legendary name.

EMLL's pay-per-view also saw **Los Infernales** (**Satanico, Averno,** and **Mephisto**) defeat the *technico* trio of **Olimpico, Safari,** and **Mr. Niebla** with some underhanded tactics. Satanico, the founder of the stable, scored the pin while using the ropes to help him keep Niebla's shoulders down. In another hair vs. hair match, **Brazo de Plata** (which means "arm of silver") lost his locks to **Tarzan Boy**. A well-timed low blow helped Tarzan Boy pick up the victory. This did not please the fans in attendance, because the portly Brazo de Plata, lovingly referred to as "Super Porky," is a decided fan favorite. Unlike in American wrestling, a low blow (called a foul or fault) in Lucha Libre results in an immediate disqualification. However, Tarzan Boy's low blow went undetected by the official, and the crowd was quick to voice its disdain.

Another difference in the rules from America to Mexico was evident in **Dr. Wagner Jr.**'s six-man tag match on the stacked pay-per-view card. Wagner was caught with the mask of the opposing team's captain in his hands. Unmasking an opponent in mid-match is also cause for disqualification, and when the official saw **Atlantis** without his trademark blue and white mask, he turned to *rudo* captain Dr. Wagner. Sure enough, Wagner had Atlantis' mask in his hands, and his team was disqualified on the spot, ending a very confusing match. □

WCW fans will likely remember the Juventud Guerrera-Psicosis *rivalry*. Now the man formerly known as Psicosis and Juvi are a team in Mexico, and it looks like they'll be pursuing gold together in EMLL.

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March 1979: Backlund vs. Ladd: Did Bruno's "Interference" Cost Ladd The WWWF Title? Also: Angelo Mosca, Dick Murdoch, Peter Maivia, Bob Orton Jr., Bockwinkel-Rhodes, Brisco-Race, Crusher Blackwell, Lewin-T. Funk.

May 1979: Paul Jones-Rick Steamboat Feud: Who Is Really To Blame? Also: Valiants, Jack Brisco, Larry Hennig, Johnson-King, Lanza-Mulligan, Chief Jay Strongbow, Snuka-Patera.

July 1979: Ernie Ladd's Claim: "Mr. Wrestling II Uses A Loaded Mask!" Also: Backlund-Race, Andre-Baker, Bruno Sammartino, Nick Bockwinkel, Dick Slater, Sonny King, Valiants, Stan Hansen.

Sept. 1979: A New—And Deadly—Feud For Rick Steamboat. Also: Roddy Piper, Superstar Graham, Backlund-Brower, Cyclone Negro, Greg Gagne, The Bruiser-Brody, Dino Bravo, Mil Mascaras, Hussein Arab.

April 1980: Did Ken Patera Destroy Dusty Rhodes' Bionic Elbow? Also: Terry Funk, Kevin Von Erich, DiBiase-Backlund, Bockwinkel & Heenan, Baba-Race, Mr. Wrestling II, Youngblood & Steamboat.

Aug. 1980: The Reign Of Bloodshed Begins: Stevens & Valentine Win The NWA Tag Team Title! Also: Kerry Von Erich, Backlund & Skaaland, Nick Bockwinkel, Zbyszko-Bruno, Keirn-Muraco, Samoans, Wrestling II-Idol.

June 1981: Bruno Sammartino: "I Want To Break Stan Hansen's Neck!" Also: Ted DiBiase, Garea & Martel, Mike Graham, Mongolian Stomper, Piper-Superstar, Verne Gagne, Tommy Rich.

Sept. 1980: Why Ernie Ladd Says ... "I'm Tired Of Being Your King." Also: Rick Steamboat, Mad Dog Vachon, Bugsy McGraw, Patera-Patterson, Manny Fernandez, Bob Backlund, Greg Gagne, Mike Sharpe.

Oct. 1980: Kevin Von Erich Wins The Missouri Title From Kevin Von Erich! Also: Mr. Wrestling II, Pedro Morales, Superstar Graham, Dusty Rhodes, Idol-Race, Rick McGraw.

Feb. 1981: Larry Zbyszko's Claim: "Tony Garea Begged Me Not To Hurt Him!" Also: The Grappler, Race-Patera, Hussein Arab, Humperdink-Rhodes, Gilberts, Mr. Wrestling II, Bravo-Bockwinkel.

Oct. 1981: Is The Funk Family At War? Why Terry Funk And Dory Funk Jr. Were Forced To Wrestle. Also: Backlund-Patterson-Mosca, Harley Race, Rhodes-Khan, Kevin Sullivan, Flair-Patera, Verne Gagne.

Jan. 1982: Rich vs. Masked Superstar: Can Tommy Rich Survive As Georgia's Last Hero? Also: Kiwis, Bockwinkel-Atlas, Mascaras-Steamboat, Sullivan-Taylor, Bruno Sammartino.

March 1982: U.S. Champion Slaughter vs. Former NWA Champion Race: How Harley Race's Attempt To Win An "Easy" Title Ended In Disaster. Also: Jimmy Snuka, Flair-Idol, Steve Keirn, Steamboat-Patterson, Fuji-Albano-Saito, Bruno Sammartino Jr., Bruiser-Sullivan.

Aug. 1982: Nick Bockwinkel: "Tommy Rich Is Too Stupid To Be Champion!" Also: Putski-Adonis, Blackjack Mulligan Jr., Roddy Piper, Rick Steamboat, Lawler-Kaufman, Mike Graham.

April 1982: How Jack Brisco Controls Ric Flair's Championship Destiny. Also: Tito Santana, Valentine-Atlas, Bob Roop, Armstrongs, John Studd, Eric Embry.

June 1982: Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat: How The NWA Belt Strangled Wrestling's Greatest Friendship. Also: Piper-Armstrong, Hussein Arab, Bruno Sammartino, Adonis & Ventura, Butch Reed.

July 1982: Harley Race—His Destiny Is In The Hands Of Tommy Rich. Also: Rick Steamboat, Chief Jay Strongbow, Buzz Sawyer, Ric Flair, Roddy Piper.

Sept. 1982: Dusty Rhodes Returns To Florida: The Tragic Comeback That Should Not Have Happened. Also: Manny Fernandez, Armstrong-Piper, Blassie-Mulligan, Japan, Bockwinkel-Hogan.

Nov. 1982: Clash Of The Titans—Backlund vs. Flair: Who's Better? Also: Roddy Piper, Gagne & Brunzell, Putski & Snuka, Brian Blair.

Dec. 1982: Morales vs. Snuka: Does Pedro Deserve To Be Intercontinental Champion? Also: Bob Orton Jr., Kamala, Rich & Rhodes, Barry Windham, Ted DiBiase, JYD-Bockwinkel, Oliver Humperdink.

Jan. 1983: Ivan Putski Humiliates Cowboy Bob Orton: Can The Grand Wizard Pick Up The Pieces? Also: Barry Windham, Muraco-Sawyer-Rich, Nick Bockwinkel, Flair-Youngblood-Steamboat, Fabulous Kangaroos.

Feb. 1983: Exclusive Coverage: Nick Bockwinkel Regains The AWA Title From Otto Wanz. Also: Backlund-Graham, Rich-Sawyer, Barry Windham, Martel & Garea, McDaniel & Piper, Kamala.

May 1983: What Will Happen When The Samoans Become Too Smart For Capt. Lou Albano? Also: Tommy Rich, Terry Allen, Eddie Gilbert, Kerry-Race, Ladd & Rhodes, Flair-Orndorff.

June 1983: Flair-Windham Match Spurs Controversy: Should The NWA Champion Be Allowed To Choose His Challengers? Also: Ivan Koloff, Bruiser Brody, Kerry Von Erich, Andre-Kamala, Brazil-Valentine, Gagnes-Martel.

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March 1984: Is Tito Santana Trying To Blackmail The WWF? Also: Wayne & Sawyer, Hogan-Race, David Von Erich, Jesse Ventura.

July 1984: Tommy Rich Is Back! And He Owes It All To The Fans. Also: Valiant-Rhodes, Ric Flair, Mike Von Erich, Billy Jack.

Aug. 1984: Garvin vs. Roberts: "Hands Of Stone" Crushes "The Snake." Also: Freebirds-Devastation Inc., Sawyer-Sullivan, Lawler & Dillon, McDaniel-Race.

Sept. 1984: Kerry Von Erich Wins The NWA World Title: For David ... For Texas ... For Wrestling! Also: Road Warriors-Bundy & Superstar, Johnson & Atlas-Piper & Orndorff, Billy Jack-Sawyer.

Nov. 1984: The $50,000 Full-Nelson Challenge Match: Billy Jack Gets Revenge Against Superstar Graham. Also: Piper-Hogan, Heenan & Saito, Brody & Hansen, Von Erichs.

Dec. 1984: The Tully Blanchard-Rick Steamboat Feud: Will Dusty Rhodes End It ... Or Make It Worse? Also: Tito Santana, Martel-Atlas, D. Funk, Mike Von Erich, Williams-Taylor.

Jan. 1985: Kerry Von Erich: "I've Got Ric Flair's NWA Title Within My Grasp." Also: Albano & Lauper, Koloffs & Kernodle, Road Warriors, Lawler & Rude, Scott McGhee.

Feb. 1985: Greg Valentine Wins Tito Santana's Intercontinental Title ... But Does He Deserve To Be Champion? Also: Ronnie Garvin, Warriors-Sheepherders, Flair-Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

April 1985: Six-Man Riot! Road Warriors & Ellering vs. Rhodes, Rich, & Anderson. Also: Tonga Kid, tomorrow's stars, Adams-Kevin, Flair-Jack, Terminators.

June 1985: Are The WWF Rulebreakers Singling Out Barry Windham For Destruction? Also: Zbyszko-Backlund, Rhodes-Blanchard, Tommy Rich, Oliver-Haynes.

July 1985: It's A Dog's Life ... And Junkyard Dog Wouldn't Trade It With Anyone! Also: Backlund-Martel, Kernodle-Koloff, Butch Reed, Hernandez & Sunshine, Mike Graham.

Aug. 1985: Ten Days Of Blood And Glory: The Road Warriors Invade Japan! Also: Terry Taylor, Magnum T.A., Bugsy McGraw, Sheik & Volkoff-Windham & Rotundo, 20th anniversary.

Oct. 1985: David Shultz Gets An NWA Title Shot: Ric Flair—"I Wrestle The Men Hulk Hogan Is Afraid Of!" Also: Misty Blue, Rick Martel, Kendall Windham, George Steele, Killer Brooks, wrestling greats' all-time top 10.

June 1986: Kerry Reveals His Secret: "I've Told Magnum T.A. How To Beat Ric Flair!" Also: Steve Williams, Hogan-Orton, Flair-Bockwinkel, Lex Luger.

Nov. 1986: Morton & Gibson Take A Trip To Badstreet U.S.A.: The Rock 'n' Roll Express vs. The Freebirds. Also: Eddie Gilbert, Hogan-Orndorff, Mike Von Erich, Mulligan-Bass.

Dec. 1986: Ric Flair's NWA Title Reign: Last Chance To Silence The Critics! Also: Nikita Koloff, Gilbert & Sting, Hogan-Piper, Abdullah-Adams, Nick Bockwinke.

Jan. 1987: Bobby Heenan's Bitter Crusade To Destroy Hulk Hogan. Also: Borne & Sawyer, Garvins, Ted DiBiase, Misty Blue Simmes.

Feb. 1987: Tragedy Strikes Wrestling: Magnum T.A. Needs Your Prayers Now More Than Ever. Also: Roberts-Steamboat, Crusher Yurkof, Terry Gordy, Wendell Cooley.

March 1987: Ivan & Khrushchev's Kremlin Orders: Crush Nikita Koloff's Russian Revolution! Also: Barry Windham, One Man Gang, Brian Adias, Savage-Steamboat, Jimmy Snuka.

June 1987: The Hart Foundation vs. The Can-Ams: Special Analysis Of This WWF Superfeud! Also: Nick Bockwinkel, Paul Orndorff, Rhodes & Murdoch, Steve Williams.

July 1987: Missy Hyatt: Will She Kiss And Tell In The WWF? Also: Chris Adams, Hart Foundation, Luger & Horsemen, Nikita-Cornette, Stan Hansen.

Sept. 1987: Independence Day! Also: Hennig-Bockwinkel, Hart Foundation, Koloffs, Bubba Rogers, Missy Hyatt.

Oct. 1987: The Honky Tonk Man Wins The Intercontinental Title: Is Randy Savage The Fans' Last Hope. Also: Kerry Von Erich, Ken Patera, Sting-Gilbert, Horsemen-Freebirds, Zbyszko-Gagne.

Dec. 1987: Hulk Hogan: Will He Be Drowned By The New Wave Of Challengers? Also: Hennig-Lawler, Windham-Steiner, Flair-Williams, Brutus Beefcake, Ronnie Garvin.

Jan. 1988: The Experts Agree: The Road Warriors Will Turn Bad In 1988! Also: Koloff-Taylor, Curt Hennig, Duggan-DiBiase.

Feb. 1988: Ric Flair Admits: "I'm Nothing Without The NWA Belt!" Also: Kerry Von Erich, Jim Cornette, Hogan-Andre, Hennig-Lawler, Terry Taylor.

March 1988: After Four Years As Champion ... Only Hulk Hogan Can Beat Hulk Hogan. Also: Warriors-Demolition, Steve Williams, Luger & Dillon, Calgary, Terry Gordy.

April 1988 (Special Issue): Starrcade, Survivor Series, World Class: Wrestling's Greatest Day! Also: Midnight Rockers, Luger-Horsemen, Santana & Martel, McDaniel-Hennig, Bobby Eaton.

June 1988: How Sting's War With Ric Flair Could Make Him A Horseman! Also: Bobby Heenan, Martel-Zenk, Kerry-Gordy, Ted DiBiase, Nikita Koloff.

Aug. 1988: World Tag Title Power Shift! Also: Windham & Luger, Demolition, Taylor-Freebirds, Paul Ellering, Owen & Bret.

Oct. 1988: The Fantastics Declare: "We Will Not Share Our Fans With The Rock 'n' Roll Express!" Also: Rhodes-Windham, Curt Hennig, Roberts-Rude, Rougeaus, Jim Garvin.

Jan. 1989: The Horsemen Destroyed! The World Title Gained! But The Midnight Express Must Still Prove Themselves! Also: Top Guns, Hart & Rougeaus, Andre-Savage-Hulk, Terry Gordy, Kevin Von Erich.

Feb. 1989: The Road Warriors: "Sting, Dusty, & The Fans Can Go To Hell!" Also: Madusa Miceli, Blue Blazer, Warrior-Hogan, Bigelow-Gordy, Eddie Gilbert.

March 1989: Scared Stiff! "Don't Say Snake!" Also: Jeff Jarrett, Cactus Jack, Ric Flair, Bam Bam Bigelow, Hercules, Iron Sheik.

April 1989: Hulkamania Runs Wild Again! Can Randy Savage Stop The Onslaught? Also: British Bulldogs, Road Warriors-Sting & Luger, Lawler-Kerry, Andre, Mike Rotundo.

May 1989: Rick Steamboat—Champion; Rick Steamboat—Challenger: Which Is Better? Also: Sid Vicious, Dusty Rhodes, Savage-Hogan, Samoan Swat Team, Wendi Richter.

June 1989: Ultimate Warrior's Mission Impossible: Destroy Randy Savage For Hulk Hogan. Also: Rick Steamboat, Rick Martel, Larry Zbyszko, Luger-Windham by Sting, Ric Flair.

July 1989: Dino Bravo: The Man Hulk Hogan Cannot Beat! Also: Flair-Steamboat, Rhodes & Perez, Road Warriors & Ellering, Michael Hayes.

Aug. 1989 (Special Issue): Supercard Sunday! Exclusive Coverage Of WrestleMania V And Clash Of Champions VI. Also: Kerry-Embry, Randy Savage, Great Muta, Ted DiBiase, Teddy Long.

Sept. 1989: Our Urgent Plea To Ric Flair: Don't Wrestle Terry Funk. Also: Demolition, Roddy Piper, Hogan-Zeus, Larry Zbyszko, Jerry Lawler.

Oct. 1989: No Holds Barred! Hogan & Beefcake vs. Savage & Zeus: An Exclusive Preview & Analysis. Also: Eric Embry, Four Horsemen, Teddy Long, Hayes-Luger, Art Barr, Billy Jack Haynes.

Nov. 1989: Roddy Piper Pins Randy Savage ... And Hulk Hogan Is Scared Stiff! Also: Mr. T & Von Erichs, Garvin & Hayes, Flair-T. Funk, Dustin-Steel Man, Sgt. Slaughter.

Jan. 1990: The Hulk Hogan Book Of Lists. Also: Brian Pillman, Rich-Luger, Tully & Arn, P.Y. Chu-Hi, Greg Gagne.

March 1990: Funk-Flair: "I Quit!—One War Ends, Two More Begin. Also: Nikita Koloff, Survivor Series, Steiners, Hogan-Zeus, Jim Cornette.

April 1990: Hulk Hogan: A Decade Of Greatness. Also: Luger-Flair, Woman, Piper-Heenan, Billy Travis, Badd Company.

May 1990: Sting & Ultimate Warrior: Running A Parallel Course To Greatness. Also: Von Erichs, Big Bossman, Pillman & Zenk, Hulk Hogan, Mark Callous.

July 1990: My 10 Challenges To Ric Flair, By Lex Luger. Also: Lanny Poffo, Dusty-Savage, Luger-Flair, Doom, Tully Blanchard.

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March 1991: Warning To The Ultimate Warrior: Roddy Piper Wants You! Also: Gilbert-Jarrett, Cornette & Express, Teddy Long, Survivor Series, Scott Norton.

April 1991: Hulk Hogan: The Challenges That Remain. Also: Ted DiBiase, Skyscrapers, Lex Luger, Tom Zenk, Fabulous Ones.

May 1991: Only Hulk Hogan Can Rid The WWF Of The Stench Of Sgt. Slaughter. Also: Ric Flair, Bobby Eaton, Sheik-Brazil, Power & Glory, Terry Funk.

June 1991: How Much Longer Can We Depend On Hulk Hogan? Also: Nasty Boys, Sting, Flair-Gigante, Cactus Jack, Kevin Von Erich.

July 1991: Can Ric Flair Shatter The "Myth" Of Japanese Superiority? Also: Embry & Prichard, LOD-Nastys, Steiners, Savage & Elizabeth.

Aug. 1991: If Sgt. Slaughter Said "I'm Sorry" ... Would Hulk And The World Forgive Him? Also: Luger-Nikita, Hennig-Davey Boy, Lanny Poffo, Bam Bam Bigelow.

Nov. 1991: Lex Luger Wins The Title—But Loses His Fans. Also: Rick Steamboat, Roddy Piper, Global, Diamond Studd, Lawler-Embry.

Dec. 1991: Roddy Piper's Exclusive Analysis: Flair vs. Hogan—Who Will Win The Match Of The Century? Also: Sting, 25 greatest teams, Beverly, Cactus Jack.

Jan. 1992: The LOD's Championship Catastrophe: Overpowered By The Natural Disasters. Also: Johnny B. Badd, Mr. Hughes, Jake Roberts, Ronnie Gossett.

Feb. 1992: Shocking WWF Report: McMahon Offers Bounty On Flair—Will Vince Pay The Piper? Also: Ron Simmons, Tito Santana, Bob Backlund, R. Steiner-Abdullah.

March 1992: After Survivor Series & Tuesday In Texas: Has The WWF Title Suffered Irreparable Damage? Also: Brian Pillman, Anderson & Bruiser, Rude-Sting, Mountie-Hart, Jeff Jarrett.

April 1992: After A Year Of Tragedy & Turmoil: The

Magic Is Back In WCW! Also: Chris Candido, Paul Orndorff, Lady X, Paul Bearer, Hennig & Flair, Michaels & Jannetty.

Dec. 1992: He's *Baaaaaack!* Jake Roberts Slithers Into WCW. Also: Paul E. Dangerously, Ron Simmons, Hulk Hogan, Michaels-Martel, Gilberts-Rock 'n' Rolls.

May 1992: He Rumbled Past 29 Men ... Ric Flair's Hour Of Power: Can One Man Stop Him At WrestleMania VIII? Also: Anderson & Eaton, Roddy Piper, Dusty Rhodes, USWA, Don Owen.

June 1992: In Ric Flair's High-Stakes Championship Game, Hulk Hogan & Sid Justice Are Mere Pawns. Also: Eddie Gilbert, Ultimate Warrior, Vinnie Vegas, WCW titles, Koko B. Ware.

July 1992: "Number Two Just Won't Do": For Rick Rude, The U.S. Belt Means Failure: Also: Madusa, Gorilla Monsoon, LOD, Nurse Vanessa, Greg Valentine, Sabu.

Aug. 1992: The Ultimate Warrior: WrestleMania's Accidental Hero. Also: Bunkhouse matches, Undertaker-Roberts, Sting, JYD, Rob Van Dam.

Sept. 1992: Hey, Legion Of Doom—Go For The Title Or Go Away! Also: Repo-Crush, Mondo Kleen, Freebirds-Valentine & Taylor, Dangerous Alliance, Moondogs.

Oct. 1992: British Bulldog & Ultimate Warrior: Why They'll Be Crowned At SummerSlam. Also: Scotty Flamingo, Brian Lee, Martel-Tatanka, Steve Austin, Sting.

Nov. 1992: WWF Beware! It's The Perfect Time For A Curt Hennig Comeback! Also: Crush, Butch Reed, Sting, Buddy Rogers, Dan Spivey.

Jan. 1993: Sting Turns Sadistic: "Hurting Jake Makes Me Happy!" Also: Anderson & Eaton, Bushwhackers-Moondogs, Ramon-Savage, Natural Disasters, Masa Chono.

Feb. 1993: WWF Champion Bret Hart: His Five Most Dangerous Challenges. Also: Sgt. Slaughter, Steve Austin, Rick Steiner, Bob Backlund, Terry Taylor.

April 1993 What's In? What's Out? Also: Razor Ramon, Rick Steamboat, Patriot, Tatanka, Brian Christopher.

May 1993: Sumo Sadism: Will Yokozuna Make His Biggest Splash At WrestleMania? Also: Jim Cornette, Christopher-Jarrett, Benoit-Scorpio, Windham & Rhodes, Hennig-Luger.

Nov. 1993: Bret Hart vs. Lex Luger: It's Not Over Yet! Also: Rude-Dustin, Hulk Hogan, Marty Jannetty, Heavenly Bodies, Tatanka, Sherri Martel.

Jan. 1994: Roasted, Broiled, Fried, Baked ... Any Way You Cook It, Hogan's A Chicken! Also: Rude-Flair, Bagwell & Scorpio, Jim Cornette, Jerry Lawler, Hansen & T. Funk-Abdullah & Sullivan.

May 1994: Aftershocks! How The Royal Rumble Shook Up WrestleMania. Also: Hulk Hogan, Boss, Douglas-Sherri, Patriot, improve WCW.

July 1994: Ric Flair vs. Hulk Hogan: We Preview The Inevitable Battle. Also: Dreamer-Snuka, Jim Crockett's WWN, Ted DiBiase, Shane Douglas, Terra Ryzing.

Aug. 1994: Bret's Nightmare Team Becomes A Reality: Owen Hart & Yokozuna. Also: Cactus-Vader, MOM, Flair-Badd, Nasty Boys, Luna Vachon.

Sept. 1994 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report! Also: Big Van Vader, Parker-Hollywood Blonds, Sting-Rude, WWF legal problems, Prince Kharis, Bunkhouse-Rhodes, Public Enemy.

Nov. 1994: Hulk Hogan's New Commandments: Say Prayers, Take Vitamins ... And Kick Butt! Also: Owen-Bret, Lord Steven Regal, Johnny B. Badd, Jerry Lawler, Mikey Whipwreck.

Jan. 1995: Our Holiday Wish List For 1995. Also: Johnny B. Badd, DiBiase-Tatanka, Bob Backlund, PG-13, Hacksaw Duggan.

March 1995 (Special Issue): 1994—The Year In Pictures. Also: Sullivan-Hogan-Sullivan, WWF '95-WWF '85, Ric Flair, MOM, 911.

April 1995: Imagine Wrestling Today If ... Also: Gunn & Smothers, Harlem Heat, Money Inc., Lawler-Cornette.

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Winter 1995: Exclusive Preview: Sting vs. Hogan: This Time It's For Real! Also: Steiners, Yankem-Undertaker, Bodies-Cornette, Arn Anderson.

May 1996: WWF In-Vader! Can Bret, Shawn, & Razor Play The Pain Game? Also: Public Enemy, Steve Austin, wrestling oddities, Kensuke Sasaki, Ric Flair.

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Holiday 1996: WCW Shocker: Randy Savage Is Set To Join Hulk Hogan's NWO! Also: Steve Austin, Michaels-Goldust, Arn Anderson, Van Dam-Sabu, Steve Williams.

Jan. 1997: It Could Happen! Hogan's Next Move ... Buy WCW! Also: Undertaker, New Jack, Owen-Bulldog, Ted DiBiase.

Feb. 1997: Wrestling's Top Stars: What 1997 Has In Store For Them! Also: Michaels-Hart, Pit Bull I, Rey Misterio Jr., Kevin Nash.

July 1997: Infighting, Politics, Egos: Is The NWO Losing Its Edge? Also: WWF-ECW, Dean Malenko, Super 8 tourney, Jerry Lawler.

Sept. 1997 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report: Plus: NWO, Shawn-Bret, football players, Terry & Dory Funk, Luna.

Oct. 1997: Bret Hart & Shawn Michaels: How Low Will They Go? Also: Paul E. Dangerously, DDP & Kimberly, Rhodes family, Keiji Muto.

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Hol. 1997: First Owen ... Then 'Taker ... Then Hogan: Who's Gonna Go Next? Also: Steve Austin, Bret Hart, Lex Luger, Ric Flair, Dean Malenko.

April 1998: "We've Won!" Maybe ... But Can The NWO Handle Its Own Success? Also: Ken Shamrock, Steiners-Warriors, Douglas & Francine, Rocky Maivia.

Aug. 1998: We Stand Behind Ya, Vince! It's Time To Fire Austin. Also: Luna-Sable, Randy Savage, Dean Malenko, Super 8 tourney.

Sept. 1998: (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report: Also: Nash-Hogan, Rocky Maivia, Bill Goldberg, Antonio Inoki.

Oct. 1998: The Mother Of All Pay-Per-Views! A WWF-WCW Supercard Is No Longer Just Talk! Also: Sable, Undertaker, Randy Savage, Sabu & Van Dam.

Nov. 1998: Demons Be Damned! Sting Makes The Giant See Red! Also: McMahon-Dude, Jarrett-Blackman, Melanie Piliman, Rey Misterio Jr.

Dec. 1998 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: ECW midyear report, Ric Flair, Kane.

Hol. 1998: "Quit, Mick!" A Desperate Plea From A Distraught Wife. Also: Chris Jericho, Jason Sensation, wrestlers vs. celebrities, hardcore war.

Jan. 1999: Stone-Cold's Personal Survivor Series. Also: Rock-HHH, NWA, Bret Hart, Howard Finkel, three-way title matches.

Feb. 1999: Hot Rocks! The Anger That Drives Shamrock & The Rock. Also: McMahon-Austin, Spike Dudley, Eric Bischoff, Perry Saturn.

March 1999 (Special Issue): 1998—The Year In Pictures. Also: Hall & Nash, Goldust, Mr. Ooh La La, The Undertaker.

April 1999: Hogan's Retirement: White House Or White Lie? Also: DDP-Hart, Taz-Douglas, Steve Austin, Mankind.

May 1999: Team Coverage: The NWO Reunion! Also: Kane-McMahon, Dallas Page, Funk-Abdullah, WWF sideshow.

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July 1999: Our Bottom Line ... It's High Time Austin Shows McMahon Respect! Also: Jerry Lawler, Rey Misterio Jr., Ken Shamrock, DDP-Bigelow-Goldberg.

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Jan. 2000: An Insider's Analysis: Why The Guys Can't Handle Chyna. Also: Revolution, ECW expansion, Guerrero & Misterio, WWF/WCW/ECW women.

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Apr. 2000: Can The WWF Survive Without Steve Austin? Also: Dawn Marie-Francine, Meng, Big Show, Madusa.

May 2000: StePHONY: The Most Mistrusted McMahon Of All! Also: Harlem Heat & Midnight, David & Ric Flair, Kurt Angle, Rhino.

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Sept. 2000 (Special Issue): WWF Mid-Year Report. Also: Mike Awesome, Nova & Chetti, Paul Wight, Chyna, Dr. Sam Sheppard.

Oct. 2000: Is Chyna Robbing Eddie Of His Latino Heat? Also: Abbott-Steiner, Scotty Too Hotty, Rob Van Dam, David Flair.

Nov. 2000: Special Fear Issue—Rock-Benoit, Ric Flair, HBK. Also: ECW mid-year report, Bill Goldberg.

Dec. 2000 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: Goldberg-Triple-H, Daffney, Christian & Edge, Jeff Peterson.

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March 2001: Triple-H & The Rock: 10 Reasons They Should Trust Each Other ... 10 Reasons They Should Not! Also: Scott Steiner, Chris Candido, Rob Van Dam, McMahon-ECW, Steven Richards, WCW factions.

May 2001: Do Anything You Want, Stone-Cold: We Can't Hate You. Also: Kronic, Rikishi, Steve Corino, Goldberg, Edge & Christian, Kane.

July 2001: Jerichoholics Beware! Serious Withdrawal Symptoms Are In Store! Also: Tajiri, Steph-Test, Undertaker, Mike Awesome, WCW Elite, Albert.

Sept. 2001: The Rock's Choice: Honor Over Glory! Also: WrestleMania X-Seven, Undertaker-Triple-H, Shane-WCW, TCL II, Scott Hall, Vince McMahon, Chris Jericho.

Nov. 2001: Goldberg! Da Man Who Could Make Or Break Wrestling! Also: Dudleys, Steve Corino, Chris Benoit, Dusty Rhodes, Lita, WWF top tier.

Jan. 2002: Can The Rock Handle The Unrelenting Pressure Of Fame? Also: RVD, Paul Heyman, Terry Gordy, Flash-Jericho, Tajiri-Tazz, WWF-Alliance

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SPOTLIGHT CARD OF THE MONTH

LAUREL, DE—Maryland Championship Wrestling at the High School: Tag team champions **Joey Matthews** & **Christian York** defeated **The Bruiser** & **Billy Redwood** ... **Mark** & **Jay Briscoe** won a three-way tag team match against **The Holy Rollers** and **The Backseat Boyz** ...**Van Hammer** & local DJ **Cowboy** defeated **Chad Bowman** & **Dino Divine** ... TV champion **Marcus Jordan** defeated **Ronnie Zukko** ... **Romeo Valentino** defeated **Axl Rotten** ... **Adam Flash** defeated **Genesis** ... **Tara** beat **Candie** ... **Jay Caldwell** pinned cruiserweight champ **Qenaan Creed** in a non-title bout ... Heavyweight champion **The Bruiser** defeated **Christian York** by submission.

—"Spotlight" photos by Timothy A. Walker

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA

SAN DIEGO—WWF Vengeance pay-per-view at the Sports Arena: **Albert** & **Scotty Too Hotty** beat **Christian** & **Test** when Albert pinned Christian ... Intercontinental champion **Edge** pinned **William Regal** ... **Jeff Hardy** pinned **Matt Hardy** (**Lita** was the guest referee) ... World tag team champions **The Dudley Boyz** beat **The Big Show** & **Kane** when **Buh Buh Ray Dudley** pinned Big Show ... **The Undertaker** pinned hardcore champion **Rob Van Dam** to win the title ... Women's champion **Trish Stratus** pinned **Jacquelyn** ... WWF World champion **Steve Austin** pinned **Kurt Angle** to advance to the world title unification match ... **Chris Jericho** pinned WCW World champion **The Rock** to win the title and advance to the world title unification match ... **Chris Jericho** pinned **Steve Austin** to unify the WWF and WCW world titles and become the undisputed WWF champion.
(12-09-01)

—Dutch Krewda

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON—East Coast Wrestling Association at St. Matthew's Parish Hall: **Amazing Red** defeated **Jet Jaguar** and **Billy Bax** in a three-way dance ... **Thunder** & **Johnny Maxx** beat **Mr. Ooh La La** & Mid-Atlantic champion **Mozart Fontaine** ... **Buck Wylde**, **Vince Goodnite**, & **Stryker** defeated **Ruffhouse Rivera**, **Ryan Wing**, & **Xavier** ...**The Japanese Pool Boy** pinned **Abunai** ... **Joel** & **Jose Maximo** and tag team champions **Low-Ki** & **American Dragon** battled to a draw in a best-of-three-falls match because of outside interference from **J.R. Ryder** & **J.J. Johnston** ... **J.R. Ryder** & **J.J. Johnston** and **Low-Ki** & **Joel Maximo** battled to a no-contest in an impromptu match ... Heavyweight champion **Scoot Andrews** pinned **Slyk Wagner Brown** ...**Cheetah Master** and **Prince Nana** battled to a no-contest.
(12-01-01)

—Will Welsh

FLORIDA

ST. PETERSBURG—IPW Hardcore Wrestling at the Florida WrestlePlex: **Michael Todd** & **Python** defeated **Acropolis** & **Rastaman** ... **Seijin Akki** pinned **Rod Steel** ... A three-way dance between **Roderick Strong**, **Kamikaze Kid**, and **Special Ed** ended in a no-contest ... **P. Latio**, **Snow**, & **Kid Lethal** defeated **Luciano Bonetti**, **Rico Casanova**, & **Bonez** ... **Jeff Bradley** defeated **Devin Nash** to win the TV title ... Unified cruiserweight champ **Jet Jaguar** pinned **Justice** ... **Scoot Andrews** pinned **David Young** ... **Mike Sullivan**, **Dagon Briggs**, & **Naphtali** defeated **Chaos** & **Blackout** ... **Billy Fives** defeated heavyweight champion **A.J. Styles** to win the title ... **Quickiemart** defeated **The Shane Twins** in a steel cage match to win the Florida unified tag team championship.
(12-08-01)

—Kyle Niblett

GEORGIA

WHITE—Southern States Outlaw Wrestling at the Travel Lodge Ballroom: **Brian Williams** beat **The Soultaker** ... **Rob Adonis** beat **A.J. Waldram** ... **J.W. Christian** defeated **Billy Love** ... **John Arden** & **The Beast** beat **Skinny Kenny** & **Frenchy Riviera** and **Jeremy Jacobs** & **Morphine** in a three-way dance ... **Mike Cross** & **C.C. Develin** beat **Silky Boom Boom** & **The Freak**.
(12-16-01)

—Justin Ramey

ILLINOIS

LINCOLNSHIRE—AWA at Cubby Bear North: **El Conquistador** pinned **Kimchee** ... **Brad Bradley** beat **Brandon Blayze** by reverse decision ... **The Patriot** pinned **Sir Adrian Lynch** ... **Colt Cabana** pinned **C.M. Punk** ... **Ace Steele** pinned **Vic Capri** ... **Josh Matthews** defeated heavyweight champion **Eric Priest** by disqualification ... **Road Dogg** pinned **Danny Dominion**.
(12-18-01)

—Justin Roberts

CHAMPAIGN—WWF at Assembly Hall: Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Billy Kidman** ... **Brock Lesnar** defeated **Spike Dudley** ... Women's champion **Trish Stratus** defeated **Jacquelyn** ... **Bradshaw** pinned **Hugh Morrus** ... WCW World champion **The Rock** pinned **Chris Jericho** ... **Sho Funaki** defeated **The Brooklyn Brawler** ... **Faarooq** defeated **Raven** ... **The Big Show** & **Kane** beat World tag team champions **The Dudley Boyz** by disqualification ... WWF World champion **Steve Austin** pinned **Kurt Angle**.
(12-02-01)

—Steve Drew

INDIANA

HAMMOND—XWF at the Civic Center: **Greg Valentine** beat **Hail** by submission ... **Kid Kash** defeated **Josh Matthews** ... **British Storm** beat

High-flying Joey Matthews has been a tag team specialist for much of his career, so he must have derived some satisfaction from his strong performance against MCW champ The Bruiser in the opening bout. He and partner Christian York got the win over Bruiser and Billy Redwood.

Norman Smiley ... **Drezden** beat **Big Vito** by disqualification ... **Hacksaw Duggan** pinned **The Wall** ... **The Road Warriors** beat **The Nasty Boys** ... **Vampiro** defeated **Buff Bagwell** and **Curt Hennig** in a triple threat match.
(12-28-01)

—Dan Murphy

JEFFERSONVILLE—Ohio Valley Wrestling TV taping at the Danny Davis Arena: **Prototype** beat **Rob Conway** ... **Bull Buchanan** beat **Red Dog** ... **Payne** & **Damien** beat **David Flair** & **Mark Jindrak** ... **Nick Dinsmore** & **Rob Conway** beat Southern tag team champions **Jason Lee** & **Derrick King** to win the title ... **Shelton Benjamin** beat **Sean O'Haire** ... Heavyweight champion **Leviathan** defeated **Flash.**
(12-12-01)

—Aaron Wilson

JEFFERSONVILLE—Ohio Valley Wrestling TV taping at the Danny Davis Arena: **The Damaja** & **Nick Dinsmore** beat **Sean O'Haire** & **Mr. Black** ... Southern tag team champions **Payne** & **Damien** beat **Jason Lee** & **Derrick King** by disqualification ... **D-Lo Brown** beat **Mark Henry** in a strap match ... **Flash** pinned **Trailer Park Trash** in a streetfight ... Heavyweight champ **Leviathan** beat **Bull Buchanan** ...**The Godfather** beat **Prototype** by countout.
(12-05-01)

—Aaron Wilson

Earl the Pearl is much more lumbering than the quick and agile Trent Acid, so it made sense for him to try to keep Acid grounded during the special three-way tag match in which they wrestled. Too bad for them the brothers Briscoe ended up beating both Acid and Earl's teams.

CONNERSVILLE—Wild Championship Wrestling Outlaws at Expo Hall: **Dozer** defeated heavyweight champion **Indiana Kidd Jr.** in a non-title match ... **Sgt. Eddie Wilson** defeated **Johnny Blaze** ... Ladies champion **Charley Boy** beat **Wee Willie** ... **Hillbilly Jed** pinned **Jazz Hoyt** ... **Drucilla Davie** defeated **The Black Widow** in a steel cage match ... **Don Basher** defeated **Indiana Kidd Jr.** and **Uncle Ernie** in a steel cage match.
(12-08-01)

—Randy Klemme

IOWA

CEDAR RAPIDS—WWF at the U.S. Cellular Center: **Lita** pinned **Jazz** ... **Billy Gunn** & **Chuck Palumbo** beat **Tommy Dreamer** & **Steven Richards** ... **The Hurricane** defeated **Rico Constantino** ... **Ron Waterman** defeated **Justin Credible** ... **Dallas Page** pinned **Lance Storm** ... **Jeff Hardy** defeated **Matt Hardy** ... **Christian** & **Test** beat **Albert** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... Intercontinental champion **Edge** pinned **William Regal** ... Hardcore champion **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Test.**
(12-01-01)

—Manny Murtaugh

KENTUCKY

MOUNT STERLING—SCW's "Christmas Chaos" at the SCW Arena: **Cousin Jed** defeated **The Assassin** ... **The Funky Cowboy** beat **Arison** ... **Ice Train** defeated **Tuffy** and **Lil' Harley** in a three-way dance ... **Solid Steele** beat **Methods of Mayhem** in a falls-count-anywhere match ... **Team U.S.A.** defeated **Team Hitmen** ... **Cousin Jed** won a 17-man battle royal to win the vacant U.S. title.
(12-22-01)

—Chris Smoot

DANVILLE—Bad 2 the Bone Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: **Rocks Ann** and **Holly Wood** wrestled to a double-disqualification ... **Glacious** pinned **Maxx Mizery** ... **J.C. Bailey** & **Holly Wood** defeated **Simon Sezz** & **Rocks Ann** ... **Necro Butcher** pinned **Billy Black** ... **Glacious** & **J.C. Bailey** defeated **Vic the Bruiser** & **Bart McQueary.**
(12-08-01)

—Jeff Krill

MAINE

SACO—Eastern Wrestling Alliance at Howard's Sports Complex: **Johnny Kurtys** beat **Romeo Ray Sinclair**, **Tim Kilgore**, and **Nick McKenna** in a four-corners match ... **Larry Huntley & Adam Hasty** beat **Chris Venom** & **Kildevil** ... **Alexander Worthington III** defeated **Kamikaze** ... **The Damned** beat tag team champs **EOS** in a streetfight to win the title ... **Stephan Q. Ramsey** & **Dominic** defeated **Damian Houston** & **Brian Black** ... **Adam Booker** beat **Frankie Armadillo** to win the hardcore title ... Heavyweight champ **Dr. Heresy** defeated **El Tornado** & **Rick Fuller** in a triple threat match.
(12-08-01)

—Jeremy Barron

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE—Mid-Eastern Wrestling Federation at Teamsters Hall: **Tim Ward** pinned **Big Bubba Redneck** ... **Derek Wayne** defeated **Blood** & **Carnage** ... **Buster Maccabi**, **Mad Dog O'Malley**, & **Lunar** beat **Joe Thunder**, **Steve Camery**, & **Sebastian Coverdale** ... **Ryker** beat **Bob Starr** by disqualification ... **Watsumi** pinned **Eagle** ... **Derek Frazier** pinned **Stevie Riggs** ... **Morgus the Maniac** & **Ruckus** defeated **Drew Pain** & **Agent Orange** ... Heavyweight champion **The Cat Burglar** pinned **Barry Horowitz** ... **Buzz Stryker** wrestled to a no-contest with **Rayne.**
(12-16-01)

—Ted Phillips

HAGERSTOWN—House of Pain Wrestling Federation at the House of Pain: **John Rambo** pinned **Devin Kash** ... **Chris Source** beat **Jeremy Stoned** by disqualification ... **Morgus the Maniac** won a four-way dance against **The Freak**, **American Jackass**, and **Jimmy Jessup** ... **The Latin Tornado** pinned **Nicholas Tide** ... **Vaughn** wrestled **Cashis Carter** to a double-countout ... **Flex Fenom** beat **J.D. Slaughter** ... **Hyjinx** beat Kevin **Featherstone** by disqualification ... **Flex Fenom** won a Royal Rumble-style battle royal.
(12-08-01)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

MASSACHUSETTS

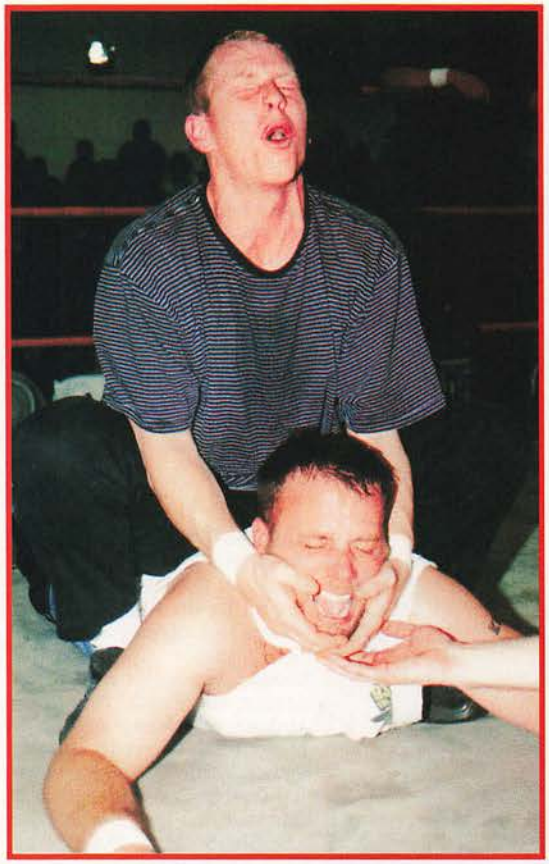
SPRINGFIELD—WWF at the Civic Center: **Crash Holly** defeated **Rico Constantino** ... **Spike Dudley** beat **The Brooklyn Brawler** ... **Lance Storm** beat **Brock Lesnar** ... **Jazz** pinned **Jacquelyn** ... World tag team champions **The Dudley Boyz** beat **Bradshaw** & **Faarooq** ... **Justin Credible** defeated **Ron Waterman** ... **Billy Gunn** & **Chuck Palumbo** defeated **Albert** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **Booker T** pinned **Dallas Page** ... **Triple-H** & **Kane** beat **Kurt Angle** & **Chris Jericho.**
(01-05-02)

—Matt Brock

NATTICK—NCW at the American Legion Hall: **The Stretcher Crew** beat **Zero Tolerance** ... **Billy Black** beat **Derek Destiny** ... **Psycho Mike** defeated **G.Q. Beast** ... **Psycho Mike** defeated **Dan Ripley** ... **The Elements of Suicide** defeated **The Damned** to win the tag team title ... **Adam Hasty** won a four-way match, beating **T.J. Richter**, **Kenn Phoenix**, and **Larry Huntley** ... **Dr. Heresy** & **Frankie Armadillo** beat **Adam Booker** & **Kid Crazy** ... Heavyweight champion **Tim Kilgore** beat **Johnny Nash** ... **Zero Tolerance** wrestled to a no-contest with **Triplelicious** & **Chris Venom.**
(12-29-01)

—Dominick Valenti

SOMERVILLE—New England Championship Wrestling at the Good Time Emporium: **"Jaguar" Vijay Singh** beat **James Champagne** ... **Mercedes Martinez** beat **Trinity H. Campbell** ... **Chris Harvard** beat **Nick Richards** ... **Chris Hamrick** beat **Evil Nick** ... **Zaqary** & **Trance**



"So you wanna be a pro wrestler?" That was the question Chad Bowman was asking a local DJ by the name of Cowboy as he applied a camel clutch-type hold on him. Cowboy did okay for himself, though, as he and Van Hammer surprised Bowman and Dino Divine.

Springate beat **The Taylor Brothers** by disqualification ... **Debonair Cruz, Tim Fury, Dylan Kage**, & **Brian Jury** beat **Kurt Adonis, Aaron Morrison, Justin Powers**, & **Robbie Ellis** in an eight-man tag team elimination match ... **The Egomaniacs** beat **The All Knighters** ... **"Slyk" Wagner Brown** beat **Zaqary Springate III** ... **Bob Evans** beat **Maverick Wild** to regain the heavyweight title.
(12-21-01)

—Sheldon Goldberg

MICHIGAN

DETROIT—Insane Wrestling Federation at Al Matta Hall: **Steve Nixon** beat **Chris Sabin** ... **Madman Pondo** defeated **Nate Webb** ... **2 Tuff Tony** defeated **Gutter** ... **Mr. Insanity** beat **Cash Flow** ... **Loverboy Steve** defeated **Yukon Braxton** by disqualification ... **Necro Butcher** beat **Tommy Starr** ... **Gutter, Mr. Insanity, Yukon Braxton**, & **Tommy Starr** beat **2 Tuff Tony, Cash Flow, Loverboy Steve**, & **Necro Butcher** in a "War Games"-style match ... **Sabu** defeated **Cpl. Robinson** in a steel cage match to win the heavyweight title.
(12-28-01)

—Dominick Valenti

DETROIT—WWF at Joe Louis Arena: Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** pinned **Billy Kidman** ... **Brock Lesnar** defeated **Spike Dudley** ... **Hugh Morrus** pinned **Bradshaw** ... Women's champion **Trish Stratus** pinned **Jacquelyn** ... WWF World champion **Steve Austin** pinned **Kurt Angle** ... **Faarooq** pinned **Raven** ... **The Brooklyn Brawler** defeated **Sho Funaki** ... **The Big Show** & **Kane** defeated **Buh Buh Ray Dudley** & **Hugh Morrus** (substituting for **D-Von Dudley**) ... WCW World champion **The Rock** pinned **Chris Jericho**.
(12-01-01)

—Adam Reynolds

MINNESOTA

WILMAR—Christian Wrestling Federation at the National Guard Armory: **Travis Storm** beat **Mexican Nature Boy Bob** ... **Big Daddy** beat **Dancing Bill** ... **Yaz** defeated **Robbie Thunder** ... **The Stone Wolf** defeated **"Real Deal" Counterfeit McCoy** ... **Devon Nash** defeated **Jungle** by disqualification ... **Nephtali** defeated **Kamikaze** ... **Big Daddy** won a battle royal.
(12-30-01)

—Dominick Valenti

FRIDLEY—Minnesota Independent Wrestling at the Main Event Bar & Grill: **Justin Lee** beat **Travis Sharpe** ... **Lacey** beat **Autumn Hayze** ... **Mitch Paradise** beat **McCoy Counterfeit** & **Drej** in an impromptu handicap match ... **Austin Aries** beat **Big Daddy Hoofer** in a first-round match in the cruiserweight title tournament ... **Adrian Lynch** beat **Sean Stradlin** ... **K-Train** defeated TV champion **Dr. Darin Davis** to capture the belt ... Heavyweight champion **The Chi-Town Thug** beat **Robbie Thunder**.
(12-08-01)

—Patrick Cooper

NEW JERSEY

TRENTON—WWF at the Sovereign Bank Arena: **Crash Holly** beat **Rico Constantino** ... **Spike Dudley** pinned **The Brooklyn Brawler** ... **Jazz** pinned **Jacquelyn** ... World tag team champions **The Dudley Boyz** beat **Bradshaw** & **Faarooq** ... **Brock Lesnar** beat **Lance Storm** ... **Justin Credible** defeated **Ron Waterman** ... **Billy Gunn** & **Chuck Palumbo** defeated **Albert** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **Booker T** pinned **Dallas Page** ... **Triple-H** & **Kane** defeated **Kurt Angle** & **Chris Jericho**.
(01-06-02)

—Jimmy Winters

NEW YORK

BINGHAMTON—WWF at the Broome County Arena: **Crash Holly** defeated **Rico Constantino** ... **Spike Dudley** pinned **The Brooklyn Brawler** ... **Jazz** pinned **Jacquelyn** ... **Lance Storm** defeated **Brock Lesnar** ... **Billy Gunn** & **Chuck Palumbo** beat **Albert** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **Justin Credible** pinned **Ron Waterman** ... World tag team champions **The Dudley Boyz** defeated **Bradshaw** & **Faarooq** ... **Booker T** defeated **Dallas Page** ... **Triple-H** & **Kane** beat **Kurt Angle** & **Chris Jericho**.
(01-04-02)

—Frank Krewda

Ronnie Zukko seems to be having just a little trouble getting Marcus Jordan up in the air for a suplex. Jordan's defensive skills helped him win the MCW TV title—and they also helped him hold off the challenge of "Soda-pop" on this evening.

SCHENECTADY—World of Hurt Wrestling at the TNT Sportatorium: **Vik Dalishus** won a 20-man battle royal ... **Ricky Dominguez** beat **Scott Scarsdale** by disqualification when Scarsdale hit Dominguez with a chair ... **Saber** beat **Oman Tortuga** ... **Thornn** beat U.S. champ **Diablo Santiago** to win the title ... Lightweight champion **Shockwave** beat **Brian Immaculate** ... **Jim Tanner** beat **Tony Militia** ... **Steve Hunter** & **The Texas Outlaw** beat **Moondogs Mutt** & **Mange** ... **The Masked SuperStarr** beat **Swinger Sidusky** ... Hardcore champion **Punk** beat **Core**.
(12-28-01)

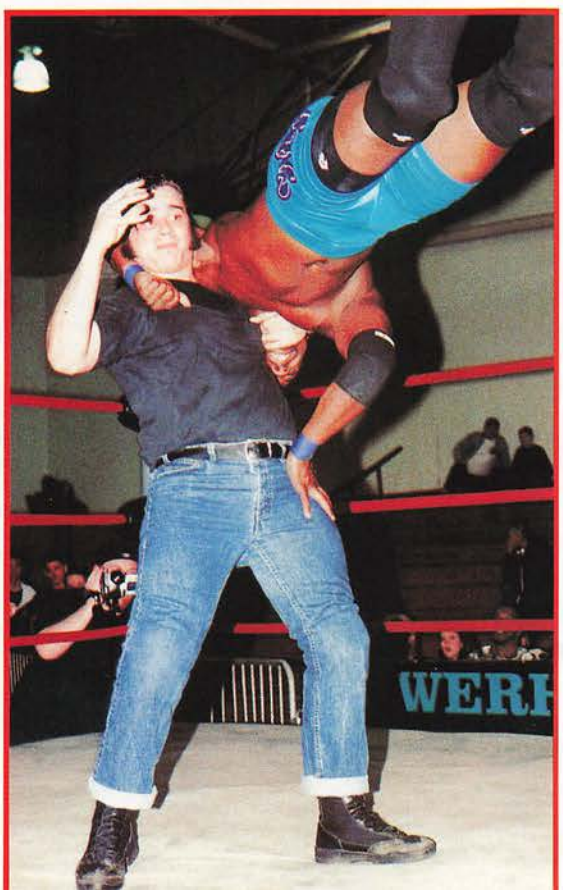
—Dan Murphy

NORTH CAROLINA

GRAHAM—CWF/FWA Carolinas "Battlecade" at the Ray Street Recreation Center: **J.T. Sparks** pinned **Tony Platinum** ... **Granite, Johnny Blaze**, & **"Playboy" Bert Tripp** defeated **Ethan Cage, Kenny James**, & **L.A. Stephens** when Granite pinned James ... **Larry Isley** pinned **Rob McBride** ... CWF/FWA Carolinas tag team champions **The SouthSide Playas** defeated **Otto Schwanz** & **Jeff Justice** when **J-Money** pinned Justice ... **Sexton Tyler**, cruiserweight champion **Mikael Yamaha**, & **Amber Holly** defeated **Caprice "Ice" Coleman** & **Main Attraction** when Amber pinned **Scott Powers** ... **"Nitestic" Eddie Brown** pinned **Madd Maxx** to win the heavyweight title.
(12-29-01)

—Grant Sawyer

FARMINGTON—United Pro Wrestling at the Council Community Center: Hardcore champion **The Righteous Rider** beat **OverDose, Crybaby Chris**, and **"Outlaw" James Reno** in a four-way death match ... **Jimmy Love** & **Butch Steel** beat **Ace** & **Demintry** ... **Marc Ash** beat **Sweet Daddy** ... **Scar Stevens** beat **Indian Outlaw** ...Tag team champions **The Southside Playas** beat **The Canadians** ... **Chuck King** & **Iron Horse** beat **Urban Death Squad** ... Heavyweight champ **Thunder** & Carolina champion **Jack Miller** battled



to a double-disqualification ... **Brian Douglas** won a battle royal.
(12-08-01)

—Marcus Watkins

OHIO

ELYRIA—Mega Championship Wrestling at the St. John's Lutheran Church Gym: **Total Anarchy** defeated **Blue Hawaii** ... **J-Ru** wrestled **Aero** to a draw ... **Dream Maker** defeated **Spence Slater** by disqualification ... **Shirley Doe** defeated **Boomer Payne** in a no-disqualification match ... **Klub X-treme** won a four-way match against **Devil Bhudakhan, Jake Garrett,** and **Critical Mass** ... Lightweight champ **Bob Savage** defeated **Johnny Blaze** ... **J-Rocc** beat **Prince Juggalo** ... **Chris Kole** defeated **Spence Slater** ... **Gabriel Knight** beat U.S. champ **Chris Kole** to win the title.
(12-15-01)

—Pat Trosky

DAYTON—Heartland Wrestling Association at the Red Barn: **Chet** & **Dean Jablonski** beat **Matt Dillinger** & **Elix Skipper** ... **Shannon Moore** won a three-way match over **Lash LeRoux** and **Pepper Parks** ... **The Funkster, Maven,** & **Ice Cream Man** beat **Timebomb, Yangster,** & **Great Hayashi** ... **Steve Blackman, Matt Stryker,** & **Race Steele** beat **Reno, Haku,** & **Russ McCullough** ... **Lance Cade** & **Mike Sanders** beat **Charlie Haas** & **Cody Hawk** ... Cruiserweight champ **Jamie Knoble** beat **Shark Boy** ... **Val Venis** & **Steve Bradley** beat tag team champions **The Island Boys** to win the title ... **Rikishi** & **D-Lo Brown** defeated **E.Z. Money** & **Johnny the Bull.**
(12-10-01)

—Alan Seifert

PAINESVILLE—NEPW at the Armory: *In semifinal matches for the cruiserweight title tournament:* **Kid Sensation** beat **Aero** ... **M-Dogg** beat **Josh Prohibition** ... **Scottie Gash** & **J-Ru** beat **P.H.A.T.** ... **Orion** beat **Adam Cage** ... **J.T. Lightning** beat **Chris Kole** ... **Total Anarchy** beat U.S. tag team champs **Klub Xtreme** to win the title ... **Prince Juggalo** beat **Sheik Abdul Hassan** ... Triple crown champion **J-Rocc** defeated **Tracey Smothers.**
(12-08-01)

—Donald Burg

TOLEDO—Millennium Wrestling Federation at The Bijou: **Frankie The Face** beat **Jimmy Shalwin** ... **Fumar** beat **John Piazano** ... **Cyrus Steele** beat **Iron Rogue** ... **Skull Ganz** beat **The Homeless Avenger** ... **Elvis Elliot** beat **Stevie Lee** ... Heavyweight champ **Johnny Paradise** beat **Kenny Hendrix** ... **Sabu** beat **Ryan Cool.**
(12-07-01)

—Rob McMurphy

CINCINNATI—HWA Tuesday night showcase at the Training Center: **Shannon Moore** pinned **The Hussla** ... **Jimmy Yang** & **Kaz Hayashi** wrestled **Matt Stryker** & **Race Steele** to a no-contest ... **Lash LeRoux, Bennie the Bookie,** & **Time Bomb** defeated **"Ice Cream Man" Tony B, D-Lo Brown,** & **Maven** ... **Elix Skipper** & **Kid Romeo** defeated **Chet** & **Dean Jablonski** ... **Reno** & **Mike Sanders** beat **Cody Hawk** & **Charlie Haas** ... Cruiserweight champ **Jamie Knoble** defeated **The Funkster** ... **Johnny the Bull, Val Venis,** & **E.Z. Money** defeated **Kimo, Steve Bradley,** & **Nigel McGuinness.**
(12-04-01)

—Frank Miller

PENNSYLVANIA

McKEESPORT—NWA East at the NWA Sportatorium: **Dirk Ciglar** defeated triple crown champ **Brandon K** to win the title ... **J-Ru** defeated no barriers champ **Sean Stylez** in a non-title match to earn a shot at the title ... **Mad Mike** defeated **Kid Ego** ... **J.B. Destiny** pinned **Mason Hunter** ... **Homicyde, Brandon K, White Trash Hero,** & **Maxim** defeated **Quinn Magnum, Mad Mike, Crusher Hansen,** & **Powerhouse Hughes** in a Pittsburgh "War Games"-style match when Brandon K pinned Mad Mike ... **Katerina Heiss** defeated **Stacy Hunter** ... **Nikita Allanov** defeated **Bison** ... **Axl Law, Scott Venom,** & **Dash Bennett** defeated **Jimmy Anjel, Dale Price,** & **Daron Smythe** when Bennett pinned Smythe ... **Sean Evans** defeated **Crusher Hansen.**
(12-29-01)

—Jack Stanovich

McKEESPORT—NWA East at the NWA Sportatorium: **Daron Smythe** defeated **Dash Bennett, Sean Stylez,** and **Bison** to win the vacant Three Rivers title ... **Mad Mike** & **Powerhouse Hughes** defeated tag team champions **Dale Price** & **Jimmy Anjel** by countout ... **Axl Law** & **Scott Venom** defeated **Dale Price** & **Jimmy Anjel** to win the tag team title ... **Magnum** defeated **Fabulous Frederick** ... Triple jeopardy champ **Paul Atlas** defeated **Hosakawa** and **Nikita Allanov** in a three-way match ... NWA North American champion **Quinn Magnum** defeated **Brandon K** ... **Homicyde** defeated **Crusher Hansen** ... NWA junior heavyweight champion **Jason Rumble** defeated **J.B. Destiny** by submission ... **Shinya Hashimoto** won an Ironman challenge match against **Steve Corino** and **Gary Steele** to win the vacant NWA heavyweight title.
(12-15-01)

—Jenn Moyer

READING—IWA at the Riverside Ballroom: **Damian Adams** beat light heavyweight champ **Bax** to win the title ... **The Executioners** beat **Kid America** & **Tommy Golden** ... **Psycho** beat **Kid Extreme** ... **Chris Hamrick** pinned **Roman** ... Triple threat champion **Hadrian** won a three-way match against **Kevin Knight** and **Josh Daniels** ... **The Challenger** beat **Smart Mark** ... **Oxx Hogg** pinned heavyweight champion **Biggie Biggs** to capture the title.
(12-28-01)

—Dorothy Podsvirow

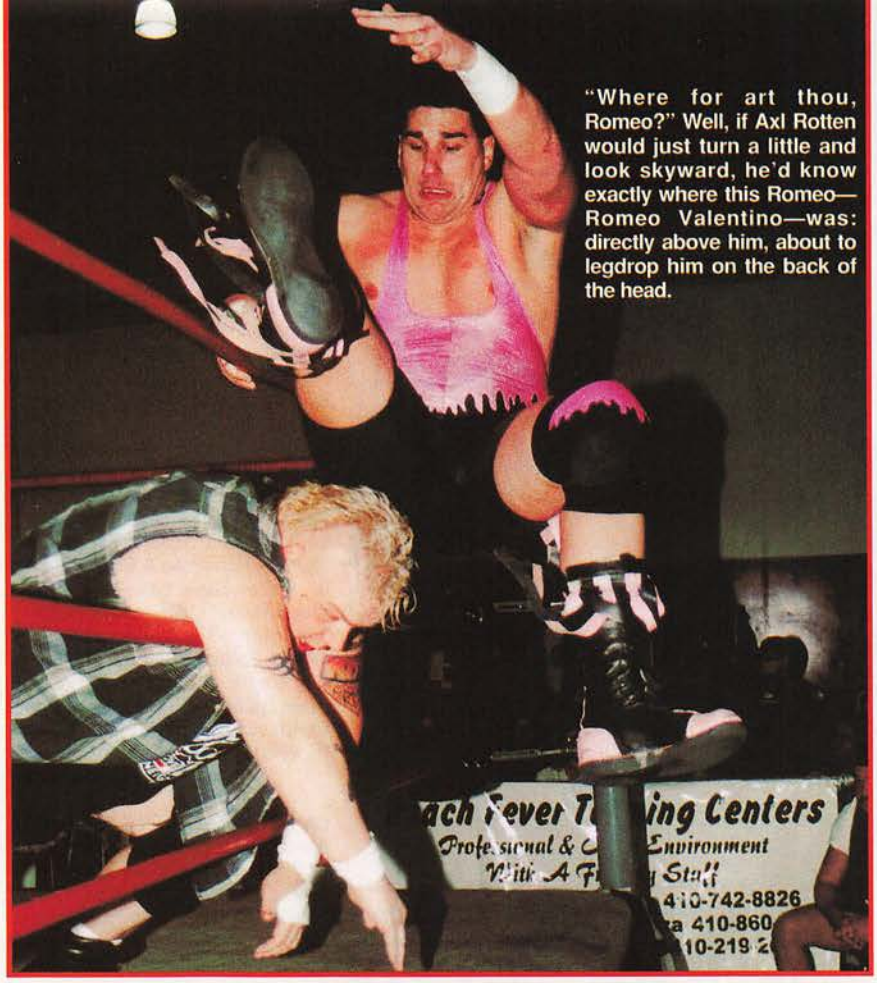
OLEY—Intercontinental Wrestling Alliance at Pheasantland Roller Dome: **Tommy Golden** & **Rapid Fire Maldonado** beat **Matt Drexler** & **Protege** ... **Damian Adams** & **Psycho** beat **Kid Extreme** & **Bax** ... **Hadrian** won a three-way match, beating **Colin Cash** and **Slambo the Clown** ... **Josh Daniels** defeated **J.D. Powers** ... **Biggie Biggs** beat **Patch** ... **Chris Hamrick** defeated **Roman** ... **The Patriot** beat **Kevin Knight.**
(12-27-01)

—Dominick Valenti

BOYERTOWN—IWF-IWA at the Cruel School: **Erik Andretti** won a triple threat match against **Dylan Black** and **Shawn Donavan** ... **Rob Eckos** pinned **Colin Cash** ... **Psycho** & **Din Mak** defeated **Kid Extreme** & **Tony Reyes** ... IWF heavyweight champion **Roman** wrestled **Steve Corino** to a no-contest ... **Mark Smart** pinned **Freight Train** ... American champion **Josh Daniels** pinned **Hadrian** in a match in which Steve Corino served as the special guest referee.
(12-22-01)

—Dorothy Podsvirow

ELIZABETH—Eastern Championship Wrestling Alliance at the Central Firehouse: **Julio Dinero** &



"Where for art thou, Romeo?" Well, if Axl Rotten would just turn a little and look skyward, he'd know exactly where this Romeo—Romeo Valentino—was: directly above him, about to legdrop him on the back of the head.

A lot of MCW regulars like using the legdrop, although Adam Flash's version of the move—executed from the top rope—is probably more painful than Valentino's. Looks like Genesis is about to find out just how painful.

Chuckie Chuck defeated **Skinny Kenny** & **Larry Santana** ... **Rawhead Rex, Skull,** & **Tank Norton** wrestled to a double-disqualification with **Iceberg Slim, The Lunatic,** & **Ben Thrasher.**
(12-29-01)

—Justin Ramey

LA FOLLETTE—UWA at the UWA Arena: **Nelsonizer** beat **The Intern** ... **Chris Fields** & **Hillbilly Slim** defeated **The Iron Horseman** & **Bounty Hunter III** ... **War Eagle** beat **Talis** ... **Big Wood** defeated **Chuckie Chuck** ... **The Intern, The Bounty Hunter,** & **Jimmy Golden** beat **Smokey Steele, War Eagle,** & **Bobby Steele Jr.** ... **Drew Game** & **Chuckie Chuck** beat **Skinny Kenny** & **Big Wood.**
(12-28-01)

—Justin Ramey

LA FOLLETTE—UWA at the UWA Arena: **Shane Shults** beat **Nelsonizer** ... **Black Rose** defeated **Chris Fields** ... **Jason Mulligan** defeated **War Eagle** ... **Smokey Steele** & **Bobby Steele Jr.** beat **The Intern** & **Jimmy Golden** ... **Chuckie Chuck** & **Ben Thrasher** defeated **Skinny Kenny** & **Big Wood.**
(12-21-01)

—Justin Ramey

McMINNVILLE—Outlaw Wrestling Federation at Jake's Auction Barn: **Drew Delight** & **Mystic** defeated **Yukon Jack** & **Bobby Lowe** ... **Bad Company** beat **Frost** & **Adam Strange** ... **The Snowman** & **Dream Weaver** wrestled to a double-countout with **Tommy Steel** & **Mr. Maxwell** ... **Big Wood** & **Skinny Kenny** defeated **Doug Harrison** & **Vicious Vandy** in a hardcore weapons match ... **Moondog** beat **Gypsy Joe** in a no-disqualification match ... **Johnny Grunge** beat **Billy Esteves** in a dog-collar match.
(12-14-01)

—Justin Ramey

TEXAS

NORTH RICHLAND HILLS—NWA Southwest Wrestling at the Texas Indoor Arena: **Kevin Dark** pinned **Phat Samoan** ... **Scott Phoenix** beat **Brett Bonz** by disqualification ... **Hellraiser Hark** beat **Xavier Payne** ... **Mike Thunder** pinned **Pendragon** ... **Mike Anthony** pinned **John Allen** ... **Brett Bonz** won a battle royal.
(12-28-01)

—Rob Moore

CRANDLE—Star Wrestling Federation at the SWF Arena: **Ray Evans** defeated **Max Muscles** ... **Dave the Rave** & **Johnny Law** beat **The Widowmaker** & **Elingh** ... **Destiny** defeated **Dominique LeRoux** and **Fair Kitty** in a three-way match ... **Cody Knight** beat **Billy Gray** ... **Curtis T** beat **Big Papa Jones** in a lumberjack match ... **Smash** won a battle royal.
(12-22-01)

—Darren H. Evans

CROSBY—Elite Wrestling Federation at the Chicken Coop: **Hugh Rouge** beat **Keith Rose** ... **Steve Demarco** beat **Psycho Simpson** ... **The Vagos** beat **Mike Thunder** & **B.J. Turner** ... **Celeste** beat **Britney** ... **The Black Attack** beat **The Overboyz** ... **Kevin Northcutt** beat **Chaz Taylor** ... **Mike Thunder** & **Hotstuff Hernandez** beat **The Black Attack.**
(12-08-01)

—Greg Mirocke

VIRGINIA

SMITHFIELD—Virginia Championship Wrestling at Smithfield High School: **Mikhail Kolov** defeated **Hot Property** ... **Christian York** & **Joey Matthews** defeated tag team champions **Marc Anthony** & **Ray Storm** to win the title ... **Idol X** defeated **Logan Knight, J.T. Rain,** and **Korie James** in a

Chi Chi Cruz beat **The Prophet** & **Tommy Suede** ... **Josh Prohibition** & **J.T. Lightning** defeated **Adam Cage** & **Jack Miller** ... **Orion** & **Donnie Bon Jovi** beat **Slayer** & **Dr. Heresy** ... **Samu** beat **T. Rantula** ... **Kingdom James** & **P.O. Pete** defeated **Brian O** & **Jack Webb** ... **Chris Hamrick** beat **M-Dogg 20** ... **Johnny the Bull** pinned TV champ **Mike Christian** in a non-title match ... **Nova** beat **Scotty Gash** and **Mike Quackenbush** in a three-way match ... **Donnie Bon Jovi** won a battle royal ... **New Jack** beat **Matt Vandal.**
(12-15-01)

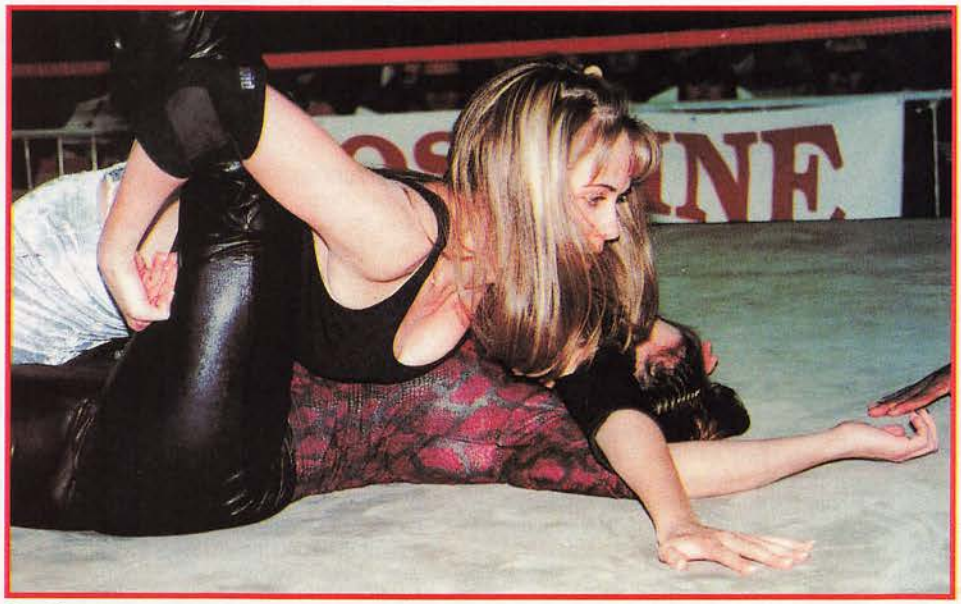
—Jeremy Barron

PHILADELPHIA—Combat Zone Wrestling at Viking Hall (ECW Arena): **Ty Street** wrestled **The Fake Ty Street** to a no-contest ... **Nick Gage** & **Nate Hatred** defeated **Kenny** & **Keno Murdoch** ... **Joey Corman** defeated **Samir** and **Brad Michaels** in a three-way dance ... **The Spanish Announce Team** defeated **Chris Divine, Quiet Storm,** & **Brian XL** in a six-man elimination match. Due to a prematch stipulations, **Pastor Jim** was forced to leave CZW ... **Eddie Valentine** & **Jon Dahmer** won a three-way tag team match against **Chris Cash** & **G.Q.** and **Ian Knoxx** & **Chris Stylz** ... **Trent Acid** defeated CZW/BJW junior heavyweight champ **Ruckus** to win the title ... **Johnny Kashmere** defeated **Menace** ... **Madman Pondo** defeated **Z-Barr** ... **Adam Flash** won a three-way falls-count-anywhere match against **Nick Berk** and **Nick Mondo** to win the CZW ironman title ... Heavyweight champion **Justice Pain** defeated **W. Beater** in a "Cage Of Death" match.
(12-15-01)

—Mark Pursell

TENNESSEE

EAST RIDGE—UEW at the UEW Building: **Jay Farley** beat **Tommy Steele** ... **David Kyle** beat **Leroy Lewis** ... **Danny Marlow** defeated **Blackie Lawless** ... **Jeff Bowman Sr.** & **Rush** defeated **Richie Dye** & **William Delight** ... **Drew Game** &



Candie might not be quite tough enough for *Tough Enough*, but she's been plenty tough for her arch-rival, Tara, during the last year or so. Tara, however, is pretty tough, too. She escaped this predicament and went on to pin Candie in an upset.

four-way hardcore match ... Cruiserweight champion **Steve Perez** defeated **Sean Lei** ... **The Barbarian** defeated **Preston Quinn** by disqualification ... Heavyweight champion **Q-Sic** defeated **2 Damn Badd**.
(12-01-01)

—Harold Lester

WEST VIRGINIA

PRINCETON—All-Star Wrestling at the Recreational Center: **The Rebel** defeated **Phantom I** ... **Jamie Bolen** defeated **Chris Gilbert** ...**Static D** & **Maniac** defeated **The Specialist** & **Dr. Payne** ... **Alex Winters** defeated **Tommy Orion** ... **Brian Logan** defeated **Sean Casey**.
(12-21-01)

—Amy Holiday

MORGANTOWN—Mason Dixon Wrestling at the Mileground Armory: **Brock Singleton** beat **Mason Hunter** to capture the vacant heavyweight title ... **Brian Anthony** & **Matt Vandal** beat **Chris Hamrick** & **Protégé** ...**The Thrillbillies** beat **Punchy McGee** & **Boomer Payne** ...**Cory K** wrestled **Zubov** to a double-disqualification ... **J.T. Rogers** beat **Chick Scott** ...**The Thrillbillies** beat **The Assassins**.
(12-08-01)

—Patrick C. Edmond

WISCONSIN

GREEN BAY—XWF at the Brown County Arena: **Greg Valentine** defeated **Hail** ... **Drezden** defeated **Big Vito** ... **Kid Kash** beat **Josh Matthews** ... **British Storm** beat **Norman Smiley** ... **Hacksaw Duggan** defeated **The Wall** ... **Buff Bagwell** defeated **Curt Hennig** and **Vampiro** in a triple threat match when he pinned Vampiro ... **The Road Warriors** defeated **The Nasty Boys**.
(12-30-01)

—Greg Stevens

MCW cruiserweight champ Qeenan Creed was a tad surprised that Jay Caldwell was able to manhandle him during their bout. Good thing for Creed that his title was not on the line in this bout. If it was, he'd be an ex-champ right now.

MILWAUKEE—XWF at the U.S. Cellular Arena: **Hail** pinned **Greg Valentine** ... **Drezden** beat **Big Vito** ... **Kid Kash** defeated **Josh Matthews** ... **Johnny B. Badd** & **Vampiro** defeated **Buff Bagwell** & **Curt Hennig** ... **Hacksaw Duggan** beat **The Wall** ... **British Storm** beat **Norman Smiley** ... **The Road Warriors** beat **The Nasty Boys**.
(12-29-01)

—Dominick Valenti

LA CROSSE—WWF at the La Crosse Center: Intercontinental champion **Edge** pinned **William Regal** ... **Lita** defeated **Jazz** ... **The Hurricane** beat **Rico Constantino** ... **Justin Credible** beat **Ron Waterman** ... **Christian** & **Test** beat **Albert** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **Dallas Page** pinned **Lance Storm** ... **Billy Gunn** & **Chuck Palumbo** beat **Tommy Dreamer** & **Steven Richards** ... **Matt Hardy** pinned **Jeff Hardy** ... Hardcore champion **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Test**.
(12-02-01)

—Travis McNabb

INTERNATIONAL

CANADA

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK—WWF at Harbour Station: Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** pinned **Billy Kidman** ... **Lita** defeated **Mighty Molly** ... **Shawn Stasiak** pinned **Randy Orton** ... **The Hurricane** beat **Sho Funaki** ... **The Big Show** beat **Hugh Morrus** ... European champion **Christian** defeated **Rikishi** ... **The Hardy Boyz** defeated **Tommy Dreamer** & **Steven Richards** ... Intercontinental champion **Edge** pinned **Val Venis** ... **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Test**.
(01-06-02)

—Marty Hunter

FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK—WWF at the Aitken University Center: Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** beat **Billy Kidman** ... **Lita** pinned **Mighty Molly** ... **Shawn Stasiak** defeated **Randy Orton** ... **The Hurricane** pinned **Sho Funaki** ... **The Big Show** defeated **Hugh Morrus** ... European champion **Christian** pinned **Rikishi** ... **The Hardy Boyz** beat **Tommy Dreamer** & **Steven Richards** ... Intercontinental champion **Edge** pinned **Val Venis** ... **Rob Van Dam** pinned **Test**.
(01-05-02)

—Peter Price

MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK—WWF at the Coliseum: Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Billy Kidman** ... **Lita** pinned **Mighty Molly** ... **Shawn Stasiak** defeated **Randy Orton** ... **The Hurricane** pinned **Sho Funaki** ... **The Big Show** pinned **Hugh Morrus** ... European champion **Christian** beat **Rikishi** ... **The Hardy Boyz** defeated **Tommy Dreamer** & **Steven Richards** ... Intercontinental champion **Edge** beat **Val Venis** ... **Rob Van Dam** beat **Test**.
(01-04-02)

—Natalie Burke

LANGLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA—ECCW/NWA Pacific Northwest at the House of Pain Training Center: ***In a tournament to determine a new heavyweight champion, quarterfinals:*** **Skag Rollins** pinned **Backyard Billy** ... **Michael Raines** defeated **Aaron Idol** ... **Sweet Daddy Devastation** defeated **Pvt. Todd Kelly**, thus receiving a bye into the finals ... ***Semifinals:*** **Skag Rollins** pinned **Michael Raines** ... ***Finals:*** **Sweet Daddy Devastation** pinned **Skag Rollins** to become the new champion.
(12-29-01)

—Todd Baumgartner

LANGLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA—ECCW/NWA Pacific Northwest at the House of Pain Training Center: **Backyard Billy** defeated **El Delinquente** and **Michael Raines** in a three-way dance ... **Scotty Mac** and **Aaron Idol** wrestled to a draw ... **Seth Knight** pinned **Sweet Daddy Devastation** ... **Buffy** & **Havoc** beat **Bam Bam Bambi** & **Skag Rollins** in a hardcore mixed tag team match.
(12-08-01)

—Todd Baumgartner

ELMWOOD, MANITOBA—Top Rope Championship Wrestling at the Chalmers Community Club: **Steve Cox** beat **Justin Gigolo** ... **Monkey Man Muir** pinned **Jerin Rose** ... Canadian unified junior heavyweight champion **Ryan Wood** defeated **Lane Silver** ... **Max Fiend** beat **Rob Stardom** ... Tag team champions **Mike Angels** &**The Axe** defeated **Vance Nevada** & **Johnny Malibu**.
(12-19-01)

—Todd Baumgartner

MONTREAL, QUEBEC—Northern Championship Wrestling at the NDR Arena: **Soopa** defeated **Farmer Joe** ... **Marc the Grizzly** & **Jayzon Reaper** beat **Raid** & **Nightstalker** ... TV champ **Flat Face Jeremy** pinned **TNT** ... Quebec champ **Iceman** defeated **El Diablero** ... **Dream Killer** won a three-way dance against hardcore champ **Black Eagle** and **Guy Williams** to win the title ... **Vertigo** beat **Made of Money** ... Inter-city champ **Blaze** pinned **Nova Cain** ... **Access Denied** defeated tag team champions **Franky the Mobster** & **Nightmare** to win the title.
(12-15-01)

—Yan O'Cain

QUEBEC CITY, QUEBEC—Northern Championship Wrestling at the Centre des Loisirs St-Esprit: **Soopa** pinned **Nova Cain** ... **Rush** defeated **Larry Thompson** ... **The New Italian Connection** defeated **Nad Blue** & **Justin Justice** in a grudge match ... **MTH** & **Manuel Vegas** beat **D.J. Domino Jonathan** & **Raid** ... **Farmer Joe** defeated **Steven the Sweet Boy** ... Hardcore champ **Black Eagle** won a three-way match against **Bishop** and **Ace Thompson** ... **Jayzon Reaper**, **Access Denied**, & **Guy Williams** wrestled **Mark Male, Franky the Mobster, Nightmare,** & **Nightstalker** to a no-contest.
(12-08-01)

—Yan O'Cain

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

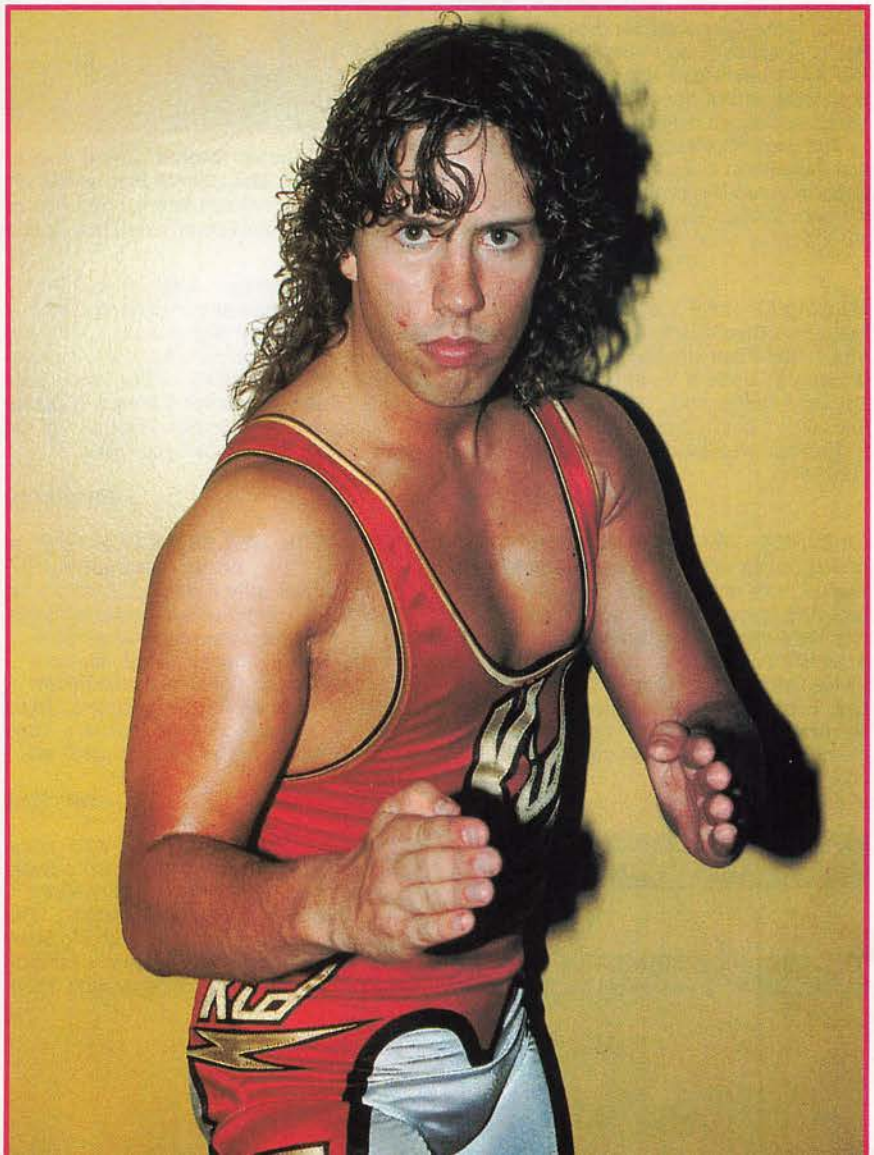
CLASSIC

From the August 1996 issue

Never as Easy as 1-2-3:

HOW THE KID'S CHILDHOOD DREAM BECAME BRUTAL REALITY

Ever wonder why The Kid keeps taking on the big, strong men of the WWF, even though he usually gets beaten up badly? He's not a glutton for punishment; he just wants to show that you don't have to be big to be tough!



By Bryan Ethier

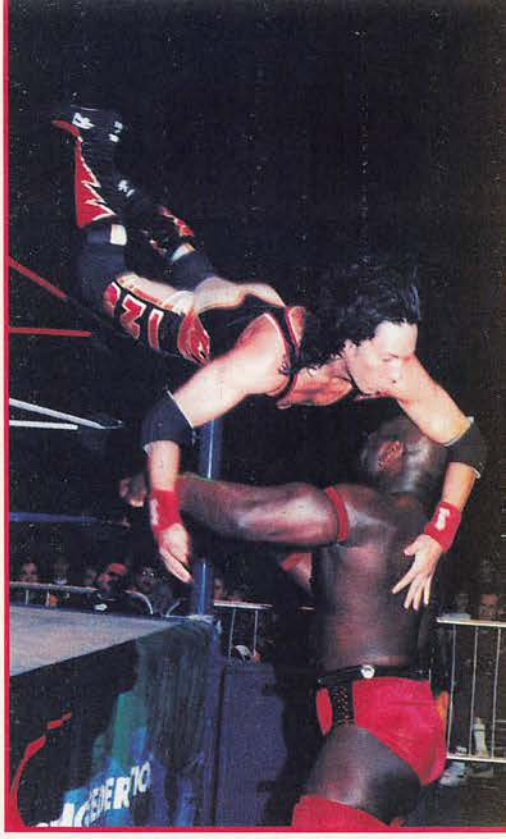
LIKE MOST 123-POUND weaklings, The Kid once dreamed of the day when freckle-faced wimps who wore retainers to correct overbites would arise as one and smack the stuffing out of dirty-faced bullies.

Not much of a dream for a prepubescent boy about to embark on a stage of life called adolescence, but deep in his bully-bruised soul, The Kid knew one day he would have the opportunity to stand face-to-pectorals against all the ruffians who had made grade school recess almost as grueling as a vacation in Bosnia.

But he wouldn't do as Charles Atlas, the original 99-pound weakling, had done. No, The Kid wouldn't lift barbells in order to look like a tree trunk with stubby toes and stumpy arms.

He'd do as his heroes did. He'd follow the path of pro wrestlers. The Kid would develop the speed of a jaguar with the grace of a deer. He wouldn't be like David, who wielded a slingshot to slay Goliath. No, The Kid would dropkick, wheelkick, and even moonsault his way past the Goliaths of the world.

He knew he could do that because he watched wrestling on TV every week. He saw what training and perseverance could do. One day, he'd show the world. One day, he would become a pro wrestler.



To beat Johnson, Kid had to try to connect with at least a few high-risk, out-of-the-ring dives. Unfortunately, when Ahmed was ready for such moves, he was able to make Kid pay dearly for his recklessness.

* * *

It is summer, 1996, and The Kid has made his childhood dreams come true as easily as 1-2-3. Well, almost, anyway. Granted, The 1-2-3 Kid, as he is now known, is one of the WWF's premier high-flyers, a swift grappler who combines martial arts with aerial acrobatics to beat some bigger, stronger competitors. At 6'2", 212 pounds, he is certainly bigger than that 123-pound weakling who pined for the days when he could don wrestling tights. But one aspect of his troubled teenage life hasn't completely changed: Pro wrestling's big bullies still like to pound The Kid into the mat.

He doesn't mind. It hasn't dissuaded The Kid from pursuing the WWF World title. He may not win

The 1-2-3 Kid wanted to prove he was capable of beating big men such as Ahmed Johnson, and he clearly needed to use his aerial skills to do so. It was a very difficult quest for him to embark on.

PWI RATINGS August 1996

Goldust

TOP 10

1.Shawn Michaels
2.The Undertaker
3.Lex Luger
4.Bret Hart
5.Ric Flair
6.Konnan
7.The Ultimate Warrior
8.Sting
9.Goldust
10.The Giant

TAG TEAMS

1.Skip & Zip
2.Lex Luger & Sting
3.The Road Warriors
4.Henry & Phineas Godwinn
5.Rick & Scott Steiner
6.The Cyberpunks
7.The Eliminators
8.Harlem Heat
9.The Nasty Boys
10.Men on a Mission

WCW

World champion: Ric Flair
1.Konnan
2.Lex Luger
3.The Giant
4.Sting
5.Hulk Hogan
6.Randy Savage
7.Eddie Guerrero
8.Booty Man
9.Arn Anderson
10.Chris Benoit

WWF

World champion: Shawn Michaels
1.Goldust
2.Bret Hart
3.The Undertaker
4.The Ultimate Warrior
5.Steve Austin
6.Vader
7.Ahmed Johnson
8.Diesel
9.Savio Vega
10.Hunter Hearst Helmsley

ECW

Heavyweight champion: Raven
1.2 Cold Scorpio
2.Shane Douglas
3.The Sandman
4.Sabu
5.Tommy Dreamer
6.Taz
7.Rey Misterio Jr.
8.Chris Jericho
9.Axl Rotten
10. Mikey Whipwreck

MOST POPULAR

1.Shawn Michaels
2.Sting
3.The Ultimate Warrior
4.The Undertaker
5.Roddy Piper
6.Hulk Hogan
7.Ahmed Johnson
8.Randy Savage
9.Tommy Dreamer
10.Bret Hart

MOST HATED

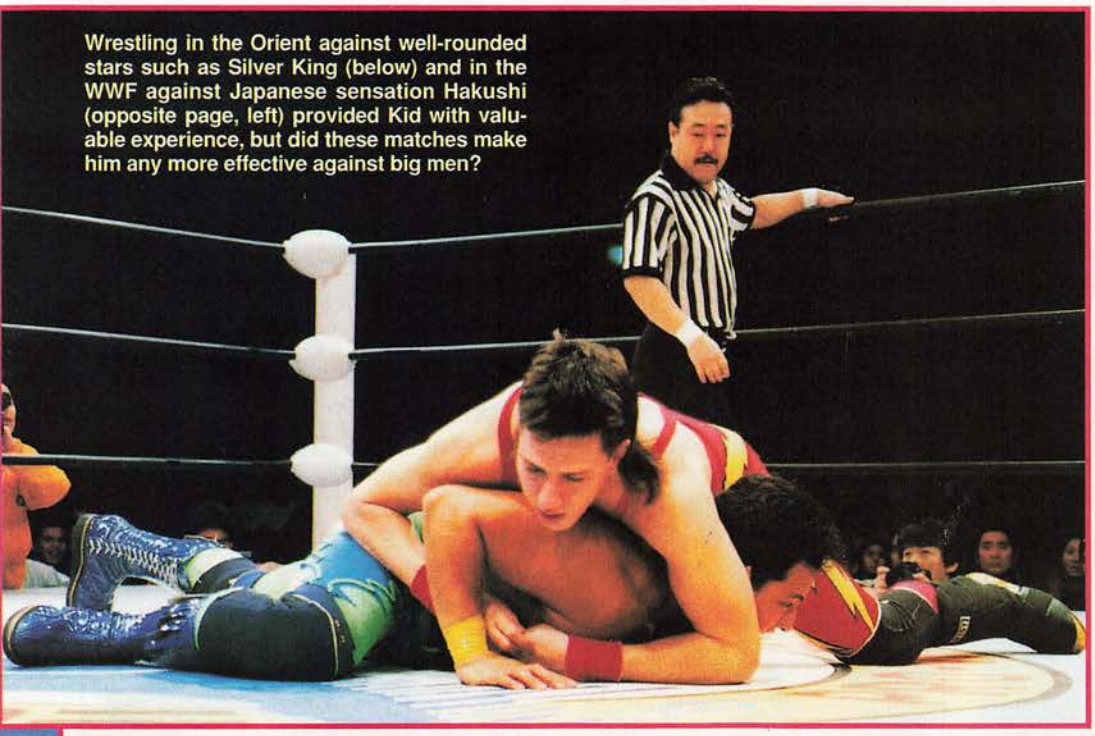
1.Goldust
2.Ric Flair
3.Vader
4.Diesel
5.Kevin Sullivan
6.Mankind
7.Jerry Lawler
8.Arn Anderson
9.Mabel
10.Steve Austin

with the regularity he dreamed of as an 11-year-old boy living in Minnesota, but he hasn't given in to the brutal reality that no skinny 212-pound wrestler has ever won a world title.

"It's a strange story," remarked Jerry Lynn, who once held the PWA tag team title with Kid in Minnesota. "Here's this small kid from Minnesota who dreams of taking on the world chin-to-chin. And what does he do? He pursues a career in wrestling, a sport where even the biggest, toughest guys around get beaten up all the time. But he just keeps taking it on the chin and keeps going because he wants to prove he's not *just* a light heavyweight. He wants to prove he can beat the big men."

The Kid's rise to respectability in the WWF began in May of 1993, when he shocked the wrestling community by pinning the 6'8", 287-pound Razor Ramon. Even more amazingly, he got the win as easily as ... 1-2-3.

Since then, the Kid has enjoyed a measure of success,



Wrestling in the Orient against well-rounded stars such as Silver King (below) and in the WWF against Japanese sensation Hakushi (opposite page, left) provided Kid with valuable experience, but did these matches make him any more effective against big men?

particularly when he teamed with Bob Holly. The undersized duo was a hit with the fans, and they held the WWF tag team title ... sadly, however, for just one day, in 1995.

The Kid began to change after he and Holly lost the belts.

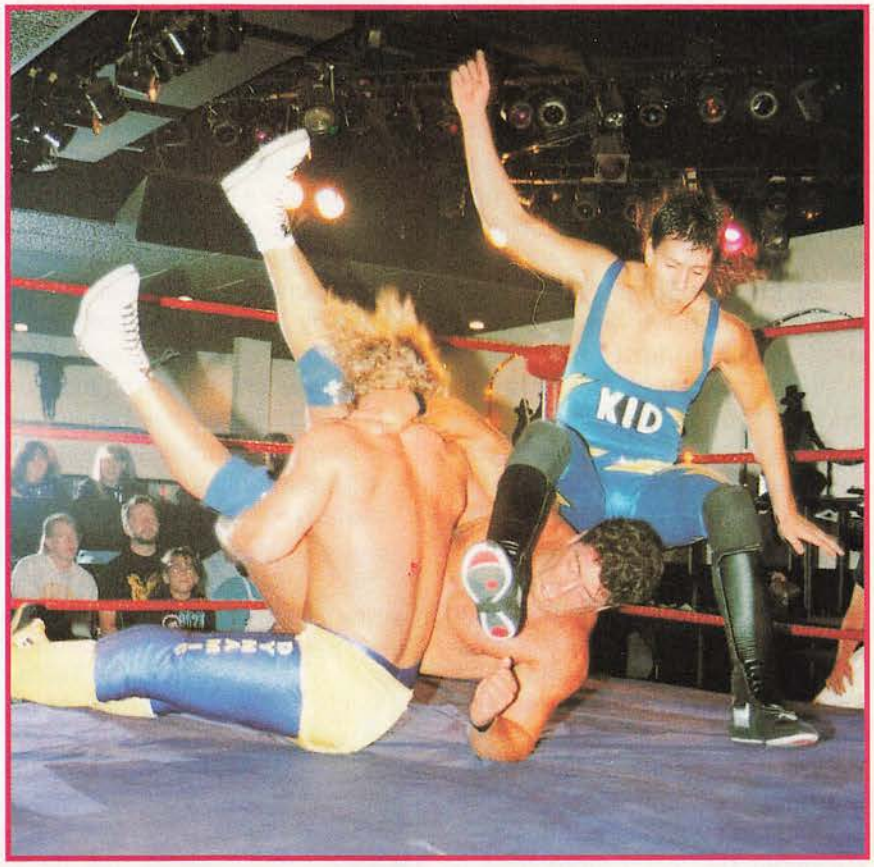
"He must have felt overshadowed by Ramon," said Bam Bam Bigelow. "To The Kid, Razor was the big bodyguard who would take care of him when some bigger, tougher guy tried to push Kid away. He *had* to break away from Ramon if he wanted to prove he was just as tough as anyone in the WWF."

Has DiBiase helped Kid? Hardly seems that way. DiBiase paired The Kid with "Psycho" Sid Vicious,

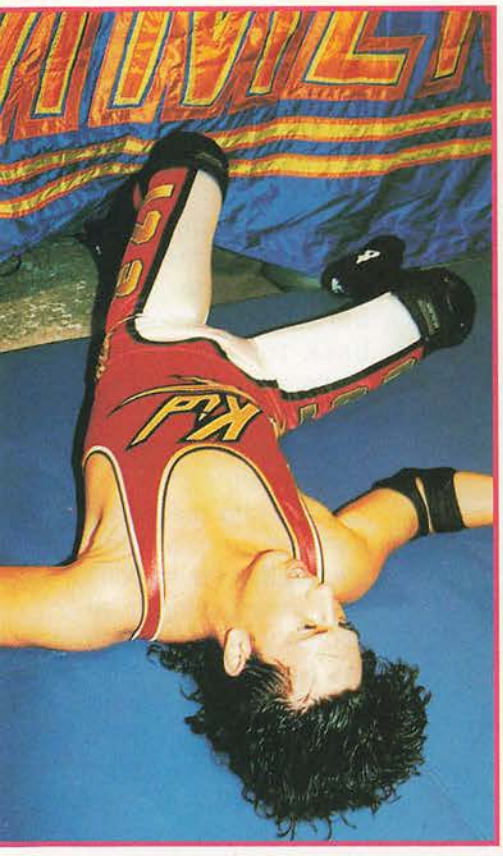
"It's hard to live a dream for just one day," said one WWF wrestler. "Imagine you're a puny wimp who one day returns to his hometown to beat up his high school bully. You do it, but then another wimp comes around and beats you up. I think that's how he felt after The Smokin' Gunns beat him and Holly for the tag team belts. He'd earned some respect by winning a belt, but then it vanished just like that."

Since then, The Kid has joined Ted DiBiase's Corporation and has feuded with Razor Ramon, once his tag team partner, his confidant, his training partner, and his best friend. But Kid turned against him.which proved to be a futile team. losing most of his matches against bigger foes, but he keeps coming back for more, and that's all because of a promise he made to himself when he was a young man.

"He told me when he was just getting started that he wouldn't stay in wrestling if he couldn't compete with the big guys, the heavyweights," said Lynn. "He always hated it when people said he was an amazing athlete ... for a guy his size." The Kid is now back on his own again in the ring, and that



Jerry Lynn and Kid were a very dangerous tag team in the Minnesota independents early in their careers, and Lynn said Kid was always anxious to prove he could handle himself well against the big boys.



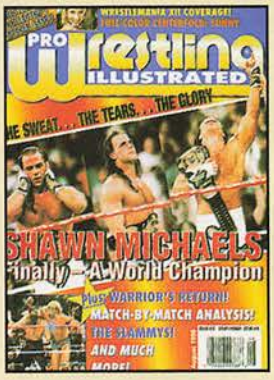
Unfortunately for Kid, a man who uses his kind of high-risk style is going to end up in this position fairly often. He can also suffer through a lot of pain as he tries to beat down the true heavyweights.

could turn out to be good for him. It's giving him another chance to make it solo, and he's showing tremendous heart and determination. He's

At In Your House VI in February, Kid had his big chance to beat *and* humiliate one of the WWF's heavyweights, his old buddy Razor. Not only did he lose that "crybaby" match, he was diapered and force-fed a baby bottle afterward. Did the public humiliation deter The Kid? Nope. The 212-pound pest continued to interfere in Ramon's matches against Goldust. And he recently signed for a series of matches with mammoth powerhouse Ahmed Johnson.

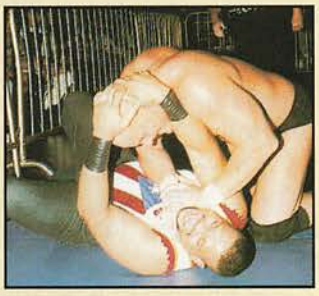
Will it ever end? Doesn't a former teenage wimp know when to stop starting trouble? Not this one. He might be losing more than a few matches, but he remains a Kid on a mission. □

PWI, February 1996



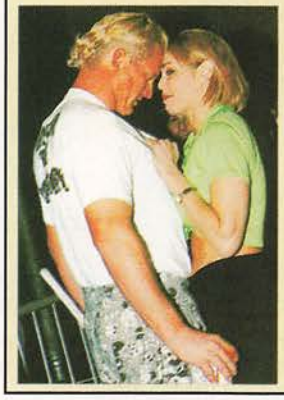
The cover: It wasn't the first time Shawn Michaels made the *PWI* cover, but it was the first time he did it as a world champion. Several photos taken of HBK in the ring seconds after he beat Bret Hart for his first WWF title were placed on the cover of our WrestleMania XII issue, the last of which showing Shawn, with belt slung over his shoulder and tears streaming down his face, raising his arm in victory. His childhood dream had become reality!

The centerfold: Sunny, Sunny, Sunny! One of the most popular and breathtaking WWF divas of all-time, Tammy "Sunny" Sytch, was featured, and why not! She was *so* photogenic. She was at the height of her popularity at the time, having just guided The Bodydonnas to the WWF tag title (with a little help from her Slammy-winning buns).



Serious Side Of Austin: How was this for a simple but eye-catching headline—"Stone-Cold" Steve Austin: Natural Born Killer!" We thought it worked well at the time, but we didn't know just how telling it would be. The story noted that Austin was determined to become a main-eventer in the WWF and was becoming nastier, more aggressive, and more serious than ever in his efforts to do so. Looks like he did something right.

The Comfort Zone: More than eight years after their first big showdown (Clash of the Champions I), Ric Flair and Sting were still huge WCW stars, still not getting along, and still eager to wrestle each other whenever they were offered the chance. Both admitted to *PWI,* however, that because they wrestled so many times over the years, they needed no time to prepare for each other or plot out strategy. They knew each other's moves, holds, counters, and tendencies *that* well.

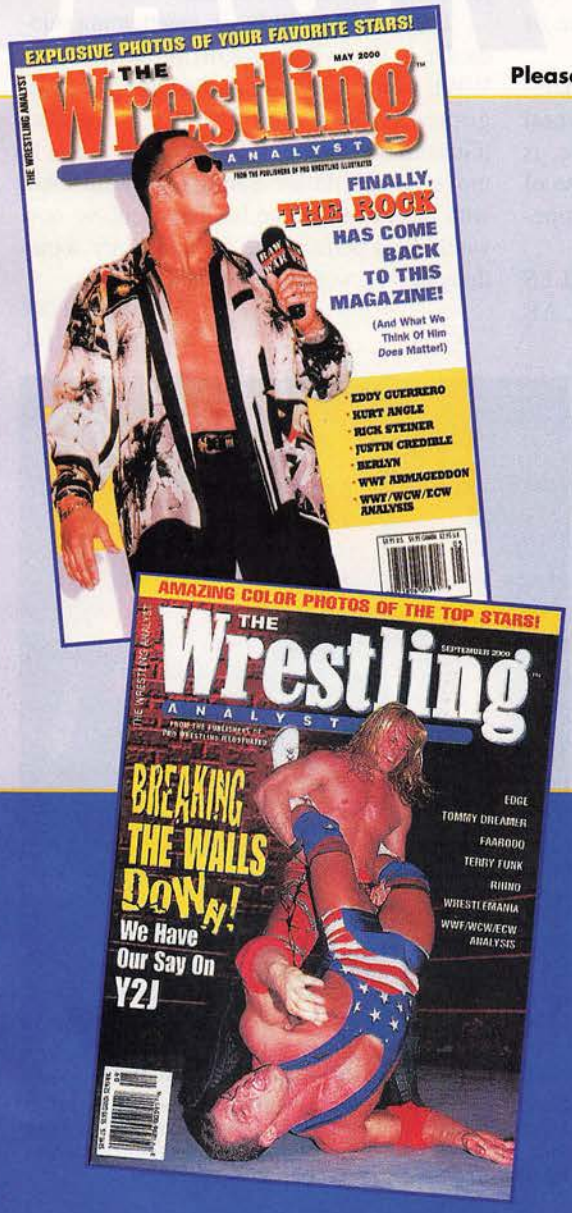


Blame The Babe: Those who only knew Missy Hyatt from her glamorous years in the 1980s and early-1990s were stunned to see her show up in ECW to manage The Sandman. No one was more livid about it than 2 Cold Scorpio, Sandman's tag team partner. He felt Sandman was more committed to her than he was to their team. *PWI* even warned Sandman that the nefarious Missy was more of a threat to him than his beer and cigarettes.

THE Wrestling ANALYST

BACK ISSUES

Back issues of *The Wrestling Analyst* are still available in limited quantities. Printed on high-gloss paper and jammed with color photos, *The Wrestling Analyst* received acclaim for its insightful evaluations of top stars, PPV events, and the major wrestling federations. Order now before our limited supply is exhausted!



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- ☐ **Nov. 1998:** Bill Goldberg, Eddie Guerrero, Mark Mero, Headbangers, Brian Christopher, Lance Storm, D-Lo Brown, Bash at the Beach.
- ☐ **Jan. 1999:** Owen Hart , Bret Hart, Jeff Jarrett, Disco Inferno, Taka Michinoku, Chris Candido, Fit Finlay, SummerSlam.
- ☐ **March 1999:** New Age Outlaws, Mark Henry, The Giant, D.O.A., 2 Cold Scorpio, Tracy Smothers, Halloween Havoc.
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- ☐ **July 1999:** Vince McMahon, Dudleys, Billy Kidman, Goldust, Konnan, Dan Severn, Valentine's Day Massacre, WWF-WCW-ECW.
- ☐ **Sept. 1999:** Sable, Triple-H, Chris Benoit, Juventud Guerrera, Jerry Lynn, Bossman, Norman Smiley, WWF-WCW-ECW.
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- ☐ **March 2000:** Chyna, Sid Vicious, Steve Blackman, Yoshihiro Tajiri, Barry Windham, Unforgiven, WWF-WCW-ECW.
- ☐ **May 2000:** The Rock, Eddie Guerrero, Kurt Angle, Rick Steiner, Justin Credible, Berlyn, Armageddon, WWF-WCW-ECW.
- ☐ **July 2000:** Rikishi, Test, Madusa, Mike Awesome, Meng, Albert, Royal Rumble, WWF-WCW-ECW.
- ☐ **Sept. 2000:** Chris Jericho, Edge, Tommy Dreamer, Terry Funk, Rhino, WrestleMania, WWF-WCW-ECW.

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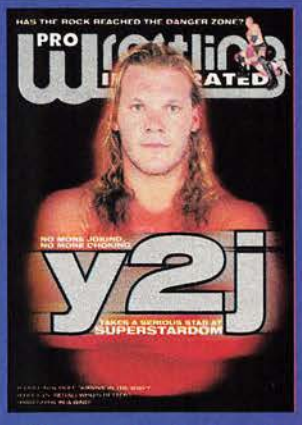

We were on target with our May 2002 cover. Chris Jericho did tone down the joking to take a shot at superstardom. And if the man who unified the WWF and WCW world belts isn't a superstar, who is? We received plenty of feedback to this story.

"I think it was great that Jericho became the first unified champion," wrote Mike Ashford of Seward, Oklahoma. "He's earned the right to call himself a superstar. He took a long, bumpy road to get there."

"I see Jericho joking just as much now as he did before," wrote Marty Moskee of Riner, Virginia. "He'll always be a comedian. It's a big part of his appeal. But it's nice to see a nasty, bitter side to him, too."

"I'm glad to see the WWF giving Jericho a shot at being a top-level wrestler," wrote Al Cochran of Urbana, Illinois. "But I'm not sure he's a superstar yet. I hope I'm wrong, but I see him getting pushed back down to the mid-card again soon. I hope he proves he belongs where he is."

GOOD QUESTIONS ...

How can Goldberg say he will spare Triple-H's life for money ("Goldberg: 'I Will Be Back!' But How Long Will We Have To Wait?" February 2002)? Triple-H spent years with WCW *and* the WWF plying his trade. Goldberg's run in WCW was interesting, but in the grand scheme of wrestling, it was not extraordinary.

Triple-H not only became WWF champion four times, but he also got several wrestlers over. The Rock, for instance, is phenomenal, but a lot of that is because of Triple-H. Who has Goldberg made "phenomenal"?

WILL WELLS
Star City, AR

... AND INTERESTING POINTS

I personally feel that wrestling has become a victim of its own popularity. There are so many great, talented, underrated performers like Mike Awesome, Justin Credible, Tommy Dreamer, and Sean O'Haire out there. Many of these guys could stomp The Rock or Kurt Angle, as far as I'm concerned.

I'm very disappointed about what has happened to WCW and ECW. They were great promotions with great stars. If they are never relaunched, I want to see Sting, Scott Steiner, Jeff Jarrett, and Goldberg take over the WWF. That would be great TV!

JIMMY GUNN
Mammoth Spring, AR

SCOTTY TOO COLDY?

I have one word to describe the tag team made up of Scotty Too Hotty and Albert: *ugh!* Who got these two guys together? I guess there was no explanation about why they started teaming given on TV because there could be no good reason why they did. I can see why some people would think Albert trying to get into hip-hop and trying to do the worm like Scotty would be funny, but it's just ridiculous and awkward.

Scotty could still be an entertaining mid-carder in the WWF, but the problem is, the WWF won't allow him to shed that Too Cool gimmick. Now that Brian Christopher (Grandmaster Sexay) is long gone, it's time to move on and do something totally different with him. I can see he has the talent, so now would be a perfect time for him to try something new ... without a tag team partner.

J.P. PRESTON
Trappe, PA

Scotty Too Hotty delivers a nasty elbow to the gut of Hugh Morrus. Scotty has been trying to make headway in a tag team with Albert lately. J.P. Preston believes he needs to go solo and change his persona.

IT'S ALL ABOUT RATINGS

If the WWF really wanted to boost ratings and keep them high for a long time, what it needs to do is hire three people: Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, and Jeff Jarrett. Good or bad, Hogan Hogan can draw people and keep them. He's a proven ratings draw. The WWF should swallow its pride and call him already.

Savage—again a proven draw. People love to cheer this guy. They love to boo him even more. We don't care what role he plays, as long as we can enjoy his personality. Pay the man what he wants and get on with business.

Finally, Jeff Jarrett. A man who gets off on being a heel. He's the best heel in the business in my opinion. For the love of Zeus, forget about the circumstances in which he left and being him back. All three of these guys are fresh faces who haven't been on TV in months (or years), and all are sorely missed. *Bring them back!*

COURTNEY CARPENTIERI
Gaston, SC

WELCOME BACK, TERRI!

I might be one of the few people who watches *Excess* almost every week, but I don't mind admitting that I enjoy the show. I was pleasantly surprised to hear that Terri was going to take over Trish Stratus' role as co-host. Terri hasn't been on WWF TV much lately, and I was afraid she was gone forever. She's been my favorite WWF diva for a long time (what a body!), and I hope she'll be back managing someone soon, too. It's too bad she and Perry Saturn broke up. They were really fun to watch together. I know Terri will be great on *Excess*. She's gorgeous, she has charisma, and she can be pretty funny, too. I'd take her over Lita, Stacy, and Torrie anytime.

ALLEN FREMONT
Hatch, NM

McMAHON OVERLOAD

Most of what the WWF has done since the Alliance was killed off at Survivor Series has been pretty good, I think. A lot of mistakes were made after the WWF bought WCW, but I'm glad to see things are headed in the right direction. I'm quite optimistic about the WWF's future, that is, except for one thing: Vince McMahon still gets way too much TV time. Every week, usually on both *Raw* and *Smackdown*, he is the focal point. Getting Stephanie and Shane off TV was a great move, but Vince should have gone with them.

I'd rather see Steve Austin go up against someone who isn't being manipulated by Vince. As great as Austin vs. Vince has been, it's gotten old. And Vince vs. The Rock and Vince vs. Triple-H wouldn't be much better or fresher. Soon, I'm afraid, Stephanie will be back on TV as much as ever. I hope Shane doesn't follow soon after that. If that does happen, the WWF will just be missing out on more chances to give underrated wrestlers (Raven, Perry Saturn, Crash Holly) the TV time they could do so much with.

MICHAEL LEWIS
Baltimore, MD

Rico Constantino tries to pin fellow WWF developmental wrestler Randy Orton during an OVW match. Reader Randy Cunelley can't wait to see both men in the WWF.

FANTASTIC FUTURE

I am a huge *PWI* fan, and I always look forward to reading the magazine. Right now I am very high on the WWF's developmental territories. I especially like future superstars like Brock Lesnar, Ron "H2O" Waterman, Randy Orton, and Rico Constantino. They have size, speed, and the potential to jump into the mix with major players like The Rock, Steve Austin, and Kurt Angle. I have plenty of praise for these young lions who are rising toward superstardom. Ohio Valley Wrestling (where most of these future stars have competed at one time) is number one, and so is *PWI!*

RANDY CUNELLEY
Brooklyn, NY □

PWI HOTLINE EXTRA!

YOUR ANSWERS TO OUR QUESTION OF THE WEEK!

Question of the Week: Would you like to see Kevin Nash re-form the NWO in the WWF? (January 1 to January 7, 2002)

"I'd like to see the NWO vs. the WWF a hell of a lot more than I wanted to see the WWF vs. the Alliance," responded James Tuttle of Cartersville, South Carolina. "But if it happens, Nash better have strong people in the NWO, not weak WCW guys like Hugh Morrus and The Hurricane."

"I think wrestling needs new concepts, not repeats of the old ones," said Marty Fleming of Benson, Michigan. "If the NWO comes back, you might as well have Flair bring back The Four Horsemen next."

"The NWO was the best thing to happen to wrestling in the last 20 years," responded Bud Calhoun of Newport, Virginia. "I think getting the NWO together in the WWF would be the coolest thing ever."

BACK ISSUES OF INSIDE Wrestling

Be sure to fill in the gaps in your collection of "the magazine that rips the lid off pro wrestling!" INSIDE WRESTLING gives you all the information you need to keep up with the pro wrestling scene! Avoid sellouts—order today!

March 1978: Don't Believe Those Lies About Dusty Rhodes: Also: Greg Valentine, Bob Backlund, Graham-Sammartino.
April 1978: What Bob Backlund Can Learn From Bruno Sammartino. Also: Rick Steamboat, Bruiser, Superstar Graham, Ric Flair.
Dec. 1978: The Shattered Dreams Of Dusty Rhodes. Also: Mr. Wrestling II, Dino Bravo, Flair-Steamboat, Bruno Sammartino.
April 1979: The Terrible Pain Ric Flair Causes Dusty Rhodes. Also: Andre the Giant, Backlund-Maivia, Paul Jones, converted rulebreakers.
Aug. 1980: Larry Zbyszko's Foolproof Plot To Drive Bruno Out Of Wrestling. Also: Bobby Heenan, Mr. Wrestling II, Ox Baker.
Nov. 1980: Zbyszko vs. Putski: From Brotherly Love To Brutal Hatred. Also: Nick Bockwinkel, Dusty Rhodes, The Assassin, Koloff & Volkoff.
Jan. 1981: Race vs. Backlund: Did The WWF Trick Harley Race? Also: Pedro Morales, Snuka & Stevens, Strongbow-Sheik, Dick Slater.
April 1981: Bruno Sammartino Jr. Confesses: "It's Hell Carrying The Name Of My Father." Also: Bugsy McGraw, Capt. Lou Albano, Mongolian Stomper, Flair-Race.
May 1981: Hussein Arab vs. Ivan Koloff: A Bloody War Explodes In A Neutral Country. Also: Bob Backlund, Bobo Brazil, Santana & Bravo, D. Von Erich-Race.
Sept. 1981: Patera & The Freebirds: The Unholy Alliance Seeks To Cripple Ted DiBiase. Also: Junkyard Dog, Dory Funk Jr., Killer Khan, Ivan Koloff.
March 1982: Backlund-Valentine Death Match: The WWF Title Is Back Where It Belongs. Also: Austin Idol, Spoiler, Tommy Rich, Brisco-DiBiase.
April 1982: "Only Dusty Rhodes Can Save The AWA From Nick Bockwinkel," By Verne Gagne. Also: David Von Erich, Blackjacks, Masked Superstar & Super Destroyer, Andre-Khan.
May 1982: Adrian Adonis: "I Can Beat Bob Backlund ... I Just Can't Beat The System!" Also: Dusty Rhodes, Flair & Mr. Wrestling II, D. Von Erich-M. Graham, Hogan-Blackwell.
June 1982: Blackjack Mulligan Jr.'s Tragic Story: "I Have No Father ... I Have No Friends!" Also: Sgt. Slaughter, Morales-Valentine, Montreal, Super Destroyer & Masked Superstar.
Aug. 1982: Is Andre The Giant Getting Too Big For Wrestling? Also: Nick Bockwinkel, Mil Mascaras, Backlund-Mulligan Sr., Studd-Super Destroyer.
Oct. 1982: Roddy Piper: "I Don't Have To Cheat To Defeat Tommy Rich." Also: James J. Dillon, Andre-Mulligan Sr., Pat Patterson, Magnificent Muraco.
Nov. 1982: Ric Flair—Wrestling's Most Versatile Champion. Also: Hansen & Anderson, Mulligan-Windham, Jimmy Snuka.
Dec. 1982: Andre vs. Mulligan: The Giant Is Mightier Than The Claw. Also: Grand Wizard, Jerry Lawler, Rich-Heenan, Jack Brisco.
Feb. 1983: Rhodes vs. Funk: The Bloody Horror Of A Barbed Wire Fence Match. Also Ted DiBiase, Andre-Orton Jr., Hogan & Patera, Flair-Hansen.
March 1983: Superstar Graham: "The Hell With Pedro—I Want Backlund!" Also: Terry Funk, Rocky Johnson, JYD-Gino Hernandez, Johnn Studd.
April 1983: Ivan Koloff vs. Ken Patera: The Shocking Truth Behind The Battle Of The Titans. Also: Albano-Snuka, Kabuki, Tommy Rich.
June 1983: Bob Backlund vs. John Studd: The Untold Story Behind Studd's Raw Deal. Also: Jim Garvin, Bockwinkel-Lawler, Bob Orton Jr.
Sept. 1983: Zbyszko vs. Rich: Can The National Title Survive This Brutal Tug Of War? Also: Andre-Kamala, Piper-Valentine, Michael Hayes.
Nov. 1983: We Sent Hulk Hogan To Cover Bockwinkel vs. Wahoo ... And All Hell Broke Loose! Also: James J. Dillon, Race-Kevin Von Erich, Paul Ellering, Reed-JYD.
April 1984: Rick Steamboat Quits Wrestling! The *Real* Story Behind His Most Painful Decision. Also: Masked Superstar-Mulligan, Adams-Garvin, Barry Windham, Ric Flair.
June 1984: Ric Flair On The Defensive: Is Mike Rotundo Ready To Take The NWA Title? Also: Ted DiBiase, Jim Cornette, Angelo Mosca Jr.
July 1984: Ric Flair Brings The World Title To The New York Area: A Night Of Champions At The Meadowlands. Also: Martel-Bravo, Mr. Wrestling II, Jumbo Tsuruta.
Aug. 1984: Junkyard Dog Joins Jim Valiant's Boogie Woogie Brigade. Also: Steve O-Zbyszko, Magnum-Wrestling II, Austin Idol, Sugar-Spoiler.
Sept. 1984: Rick Martel Dethrones Jumbo Tsuruta: Finally, And AWA Champion To Be Proud Of. Also: Brody-LeDuc, Iron Sheik, Kerry Von Erich, Rock 'n' Roll Express.
Oct. 1984: Collision Of The Florida Musclemen: Can Billy Jack Squeeze Superstar Graham Out Of Wrestling? Also: Road Warriors, Flair-Steamboat, Eddie Gilbert, Orndorff & Shultz-Atlas & Johnson.
Nov. 1984: Dusty Rhodes: Champion Of Champions ... And Still The Lord Of The Ring. Also: Rich-Gilbert, Gino Hernandez, Road Warriors, JYD-Reed.
Dec. 1984: How Hulkamania Trampled Big John Studd. Also: Road Warriors, Magnum T.A., Wahoo McDaniel, Sullivan-Rhodes.
March 1985: He's Back And Better Than Ever: Backlund-A-Mania Is Sweeping The Nation! Also: Koloffs, Billy Jack, Von Erichs-Devastation Inc.
June 1985: Sgt. Slaughter Topples Ric Flair—So Why Isn't He Champion? Also: Ellering & Road Warriors, Koloffs & Khrushchev-Von Erichs, Kevin Von Erich, Andre & JYD.
Sept. 1985: A Psychologist Examines "Rowdy" Roddy Piper! Is He As Crazy As You Think He Is? Also: Magnum-Blanchard, Fantastics, Ric Flair, Gagne & Sammartino.
Jan. 1986: Rick Steamboat vs. Magnificent Muraco: The Volacano Rumbles. Also: Warriors & Ellering, Mike Von Erich, Jake Roberts, Koloff & Khrushchev-Rock 'n' Rolls.
March 1986: Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo: Will Their Reunion Spell Disaster For Kendall Windham? Also: Studd-Hillbilly, Rick Rude, Jerry Lawler, Russians-Road Warriors.
April 1986: Starrcade's Over, But The Feud Rages On: Dusty Rhodes And Ric Flair Cannot Survive '86! Also: Andre-Heenan, Bill Watts, Scott Hall, Lance Von Erich.
June 1986: Barry Windham's NWA Mission: Humiliate Ric Flair! Also: Nord-Road Warriors, British Bulldogs, Lance Von Erich-One Man Gang, Tully Blanchard.
July 1986: All-American Special Issue: Sgt. Slaughter, Hulk Hogan, Magnum T.A. Also: Ivan Koloff, Rude-Lance Von Erich.
Aug. 1986: WrestleMania 2: Hulk Hogan's Night Of Redemption. Also: Jim & Ron Garvin, Steve Williams, Rick Martel, Sir Oliver Humperdink.
Sept. 1986: Dusty Rhodes & Magnum T.A.: America's Team Is Not Out For Glory ... It's Out For Revenge! Also: Andre-Hogan, Chris Adams, Barry Windham, Scott Hall.
Oct. 1986: The NWA Championship Sinks To A New Low: Ric Flair Needs 10 Thugs To Defeat Lex Luger! Also: Road Warriors, Randy Savage, Verne Gagne, Fantastics-Sheepherders.
Nov. 1986: Paul Ellering's Own Story: "How My Road Warriors Made Dusty Rhodes NWA Champion." Also: Adams-Rude, British Bulldogs, Bockwinkel-Hansen, Bill Watts.
Dec. 1986: Rock 'n' Roll Revival: Morton And Gibson Regain The NWA World Tag Title! Also: Lex Luger, Hogan-Adonis, Hall-DeBeers, Baby Doll.
Jan. 1987: The New Roddy Piper: Why The Fans Love Him ... But Why They Should Hate Him! Also: Terry Taylor, Magnum T.A., Rude-Flair, Bam Bam Bigelow.
Feb. 1987: Hogan, Piper, Orndorff: The WWF's Hate Triangle. Also: Terry Taylor, Ric Flair, Midnight Rockers, Kevin Von Erich.
March 1987: Happy Anniversary, Hulk Hogan! The WWF Champion Celebrates Three Years At The Top. Also: Ric Flair, Missy-Gilbert, Lex Luger, Bulldogs, Koloffs.
April 1987: Steamboat & Windham: Manny Happy Returns! Also: Paul Ellering, Hacksaw Duggan, prospects.
May 1987: Barry Windham's Warning To Lex Luger: "Keep Away From The Four Horsemen." Also: Steamboat-Savage, Hogan-Andre, Freebirds & Sunshine, Williams-OMG, Midnight Rockers.
June 1987: Nikita Koloff's Mission: Saddle The Horsemen And Trample Lex Luger! Also: Roddy Piper, Adams & Taylor, Bruiser Brody, Scott Hall.
July 1987: Exclusive Ringside Reports: WrestleMania III Makes History! Also: Midnight Rockers, Mike Rotundo, Danny Davis, Ted DiBiase.
Aug. 1987: The Superpowers' Super Victory: Dusty Rhodes & Nikita Koloff Win The Crockett Cup. Also: Hulk Hogan, Lane & Cornette, Mike Von Erich, Adams & Taylor.
Sept. 1987: Hulk Hogan Defeats Harley Race: How Fate Took The Greatness Out Of This Violent Feud. Also: New Breed-R&R Express, Rich & Idol, Honky Tonk Man, Eddie Gilbert.
Oct. 1987: The Rock 'n' Roll Express Win Their Fourth NWA Title: Also: Hogan-Bigelow, Rhodes-Blanchard, scaffold, Kevin Sullivan.
Nov. 1987: Special Fan Poll: Should Mr. T Be Allowed To Referee? Also: War Games, Bulldogs, Condrey & Rose, Dusty Rhodes.
Dec. 1987: Rhodes Challenges Luger: Will Dusty's U.S. Title Hopes Split The Superpowers? Also: Hayes-Bubba, Magnum T.A., Randy Savage, Al Perez.
Jan. 1988: Is Hulk Hogan Bored With The WWF Title? Also: R&Rs-Horsemen, Flair-R. Garvin, Adrian Adonis, Steve Williams.
Feb. 1988: A Special Analysis By Jesse Ventura: Randy Savage Has Wimped Out! Also: Sting, R&Rs-Blanchard & Anderson, Kevin Von Erich, Dangerously-Lawler-Dundee.
March 1988: Bam Bam Bigelow: Wrestling's Most Dangerous Man. Also: Adams-Perez, Nikita Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds.
May 1988: Million-Dollar Middleman: The Future Of The WWF Is In Ted DiBiase's Hands. Also: Zbyszko & Baby Doll, Road Warriors-Konga & Warlord, Fritz Von Erich, Rockers-Express.
June 1988: The Noble Savage: How Beauty Killed The Beast Within "The Macho Man." Also: Warriors-Warlord & Barbarian, R&R Express, Baby Doll, G. Gagne-Hennig.
Aug. 1988: What Randy Savage Must Do To Escape The Shadow Of Hulk Hogan. Also: Hyatt-Gilbert, Sting, Michael Hayes, Honky Tonk.
Oct. 1988: Preview & Analysis: Megapowers vs. Megabucks. Also: Horsemen, Jerry Lawler, Warlord & Barbarian, Dangerously-Gilbert, Beefcake-Honky Tonk.
Nov. 1988: Dusty Rhodes vs. Barry Windham: The Night The Teacher Learned A Lesson. Also: Kerry-Lawler, Lex Luger, Muraco-Valentine, Freebirds.
Dec. 1988: Exclusive "Hotseat" Interview: Roddy Piper—Will He Ever Be Back? Also: Powers of Pain, Ultimate Warrior, Ric Flair, Bambi-Mystic, Kevin Von Erich.
Feb. 1989: Tully & Arn Will Fall Under Bobby Heenan! A Special Analysis By J.J. Dillon. Also: Hogan-Bossman, Sgt. Slaughter, Lawler-*Inside Wrestling*, Davis-Wayne.
June 1989: Finally, Fortune Favors The Challenger: Rick Steamboat Wins Ric Flair's NWA Belt! Also: Morton & Gibson, Macho Madness-Hulkamania, Lex Luger, Jimmy Jack Funk.
July 1989: Megapowers II? It's Time For Ultimate Warrior And Sting To Reunite! Also: Kerry Von Erich, Savage & Hart, Barry Windham, Demolition-Powers of Pain, ex-NWA stars.
Aug. 1989: Your Ballots Are In: Hulkamania Rules! Also: Tanaka & Diamond, Rick Steamboat, Bigelow-Rhodes, Rick Rude, Jim Cornette.
Sept. 1989: Savage Is Shamed By Hogan—Only Elizabeth Can Save Him Now. Also: Lex Luger, Mil Mascaras, Dusty Rhodes, Bushwhackers, Skandor Akbar.
Oct. 1989: Dusty Rhodes' WWF Hit List. Also: Hall-Pillman-Vicious, Curt Hennig, Warriors, Terry Gordy, Kevin Von Erich.
Nov. 1989: Please, Elizabeth—Don't Wrestle Sherri! Also: Mil Mascaras, Dangerously-Cornette, Sting-T. Funk, Lex Luger, Jake Roberts.
Dec. 1989: The Dusty Road Is Paved With Gold: The American Dream Lives On! Also: Ric Flair, Hogan-Zeus, Embry-Chu-hi, Lex Luger, Larry Zbyszko.
Jan. 1990 Why Sting's Friendship Is Tearing Ric Flair Apart. Also: Morton & Gibson, Hulk Hogan, Sting-Flair, Roberts-DiBiase, Lawler-Embry.
Feb. 1990: Sex Symbol Showdown: Rude's Out ... Piper's In ... And The Fans Love It! Also: Warriors-Skyscrapers, Jimmy Snuka, Tom Zenk, Destruction Crew, Kerry Von Erich.
March 1990 (Special Issue): The '80s: A Rousing Review Of A Dynamic Decade. Also: Bobby Heenan, Ric Flair, Paul Orndorff.
April 1990: Starrcade '89: Night Of The Iron Men. Also: Warrior-Hogan, Dustin Rhodes, Buzz Sawyer, WWF shuffle.
May 1990: WrestleMania VI Main Event: Hulk Hogan vs. Ultimate Warrior: Exclusive Preview & Analysis. Also: Jerry Lawler, Al Perez, Lex Luger, Woman, LPWA.
June 1990: Tragedy Strikes Sting! How You Can Help Speed His Recovery. Also: Saito-Zbyszko, Earthquake, Ultimate Warrior, Jeff Jarrett.
July 1990: Our Urgent Plea To Hulk Hogan & Ultimate Warrior: Team Up And Eliminate These Men. Also: Steiners, Sting, Earthquake, Kokina Maximus, Tessa.
Aug. 1990: The Experts Agree: Lex Luger Has Made Ric Flair A Broken Man: Also: Hulk Hogan, Ultimate Warrior, Pillman & Zenk, Terry Taylor, Jerry Lawler.
Sept. 1990: Fighting Fire With Fire: The Awesome Foursome—Committed To Destroying The Horsemen. Also: Hulk Hogan, Hacksaw Duggan, JYD, Adams-Jeannie, Midnight Express.
Oct. 1990: Sting: "I Feel Like I've Conquered The World!" Also: Legion of Doom, Bushwhackers, El Gigante, Mike Rotundo, Juice Patrol.
Nov. 1990: Ric Flair & Hulk Hogan: A Tale Of Two Ex-Champions. Also: Sid Vicious, Sgt. Slaughter, Jeannie-Toni, Mr. Fuji & Orient Express.
Dec. 1990: Halloween Havoc Horror! Why Sting Is Spooked By Sid Vicious. Also: Hulk Hogan, Kerry Von Erich, Jim Cornette, Larry Zbyszko.
Jan. 1991: Warning To The Ultimate Warrior: The Legion Of Doom Will Lead You Tom Desruction. Also: Paul E. Dangerously, Chris Adams, Steiners, Lawler-T. Funk.
Feb. 1991: Our Plan For The "Hulkster" To Regain The WWF World Belt. Also: Terry Taylor, Rick Martel, Sting & Simmons, all-annoying, Stan Hansen.
March 1991: The Earthquake Feud Rumbles On: Will Hulk Hogan Be The Victim Of His Own Deadly Obsession? Also: Roberts-Martel, Sting-Hansen, Keirn-Perez, Barry Windham.
April 1991: The Steiners: They's Be Wrestling's Greatest Tag Team, But ... Also: Eddie Gilbert, Flair-Sting, Steiners, Roddy Piper, Larry Zbyszko, Sgt. Slaughter.
May 1991: Savage vs. Warrior: The Bloodlust Of Ex-Champions. Also: Steiners, Sting, Virgil, D. Sammartino-I. Koloff.
June 1991: Steiners, LOD: Tag Team Thunder. Also: Steve Williams, Nikita Koloff, I-C belt, Dundees, Arn Anderson.
July 1991: Hogan's Burning Mad! Beating Slaughter For The Title Was Not Enough. Also: Virgil, Nastys, Steiners, Dan Spivey, Terry Funk.
Aug. 1991: Are The Steiners Getting Too Cocky For Their Own Good? Also: Jerry Lawler, Rick Steamboat, Warrior-Undertaker, Dustin Rhodes. Flair-Windham.
Sept. 1991: Justice Is In The WWF ... And Hogan's In The Biggest Trouble Of His Life! Also: Missy-Paul E., Rick Rude, Curt Hennig, Stevie Ray, Diamond Exchange.
Oct. 1991: Exclusive Preview & Analysis: SummerSlam '91. Also: Savage & Liz, Hogan & Warrior, Leg Luger, Santana-Atlas, Steve Williams, Studd-Zenk.
Nov. 1991: Our Investigation Reveals ... The Truth Behind The Hogan-Savage Connection. Also: Lex Luger, Ric Flair, War Games, Mounties, foreign objects.
Dec. 1991: A Night To Remember: SummerSlam Provides Heat For The Cold Months Ahead. Also: Alexandra York, Simmons-Luger, Lane & Cornette, Leatherface.
Jan. 1992: *Inside Wrestling* Reveals: Sting's Memo From A Maniac! Also: Freebirds, Blackhearts, Bret Hart, Dusty Rhodes, Mike Rotundo.
Feb. 1992: A Reign Of Pain: Lex Luger—The Agony Of A World Champion. Also: Bret Hart, Patriot, Rick Rude, Enforcers, Thesz & Rogers.

March 1992: Who's Winning The Hogan-Flair Wars? Also: Steiners, Survivor Series, Enforcers-Rhodes & Steamboat, Johnny B. Badd.

May 1992: War! WrestleMania Will Be Sid And Hulk's Battleground. Also: Jushin Liger, Eddie Gilbert, Repo Man, Austin-Blossom, Tri-State & UWF.

June 1992: Sting: A New Champion, A New Era. Also: Hulk Hogan, Harley Race, Marcus Bagwell, Tony Atlas, IRS & DiBiase.

July 1992: Is Regaining The WWF Title An Impossible Undertaking? Also: Sherri & Shawn, Big Van Vader, Gordy & Williams, Kamala, Joe Savoldi.

Aug. 1992: The Closer Flair Gets ... The More Savage "Macho Man" Becomes. Also: Jack-Badd, Brian Christopher, LOD & Ellering, Taylor & Valentine, Dusty Wolfe.

Sept. 1992: Hulk Hogan's "Retirement": Why The WWF Will Never Let Him Rest In Peace. Also: War Games, Big Van Vader, Kamala, Marty Jannetty, U.K.

Oct. 1992: SummerSlam '92: Exclusive Preview & Analysis. Also: S. Steiner-Muta, Ron Simmons, Eddie Gilbert, Eric Embry.

Nov. 1992: The Great American Crash: Vader Crushes Sting For The WCW World Title. Also: Ric Flair, Ultimate Warrior, Madusa, Warlord & Barbarian-Bushwhackers, top rope rule.

Dec. 1992: Hey, Ric Flair: Stop Whining And Start Winning. Also: Razor Ramon, Heavenly Bodies, Jeff Jarrett, Windham & D. Rhodes, NWA title.

Jan. 1993 (Special Edition): 80,355 Fans Can't Be Wrong: This Was The Greatest SummerSlam Ever! Also: WWF-USWA, LOD, Sting-Simmons, Bret-Shango, Rude-Dustin.

March 1993: Who Controls The Balance Of Power In The WWF? Also: Shawn Michaels, Nikita Koloff, Windham-Dustin, Survivor Series, Rod Price.

April 1993: New Blood! The Wrestlers Who Could Revitalize The WWF In '93. Also: Z-Man & Gunn, Sting-Vader, Dangerous Alliance, Ric Flair.

May 1993: Exclusive WrestleMania IX Match Analysys. Also: Andre the Giant, Pillman & Austin, Great Muta, Headshrinkers-Steiners, 2 Cold Scorpio.

Feb. 1994: Our Holiday Wish List For 1994. Also: Hogan-Savage-Bret, Hacksaw Duggan, Doinks, Hollywood Blonds, Steven Regal.

April 1994 (Special Issue): The *Inside Wrestling* Computer Tournament. Also: Lex Luger, Starrcade, Yoko-Fuji, Ric Flair, Curt Hennig, Funk-Sabu.

May 1994: Lex Luger & Bret Hart: Their Greatest Triumphs, Their Gravest Tragedies. Also: Flair-Rude, Rick Morton, Heenan-Bockwinkel, Brian Christopher, Yoko-Booger.

June 1994: Wake Up, Rick Steamboat: Ric Flair Is Still "Slick" Ric! Also: Jimmy Snuka, Tony Anthony, IRS, Bruise Brothers, Alundra Blayze, Freebirds.

July 1994 (Special Issue): A Look Into Wrestling's Future: You Won't Believe What You'll See! Also: Ron Simmons, Sting, Earthquake-Booger, Bob Armstrong, Diesel.

Oct. 1994 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Doink, Vader-Race, Mabel, Dory Funk Jr., Owen-Bret, Hall of Fame.

March 1995: Predictions 1995. Also: Nastys, Razor Ramon, Tasmaniac, Kid-Man O'-War, Pillman & Hogan.

June 1995: The Beginning Of The End? Will Hulk Hogan Get Burned By Friendly Fire? Also: Steve Austin, Gangstas, Public Enemy, Bret-Owen, Jeff Jarrett.

Aug. 1995: The Untold Truth: WrestleMania X—The Winners And Losers: Also: Johnny B. Badd, Bam Bam Bigelow, John Studd, Bubba-Sting.

Oct. 1995 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Randy Savage, Bret & Cactus, Sting, Diesel, Hawk.

Nov. 1995: One Defense In Four Months?! Strip Hulk Hogan Of The Title—Now! Also: Alex Wright, Tatanka, King of Ring, Chris Benoit, Backlund-Clinton.

Dec. 1995: White With Fright, Green With Envy: Why The Undertaker Had To Bury Kama. Also: Vader-Hogan, Warrior-Renegade, Gangstas-PE, Waylon Mercy, Heavenly Bodies.

Jan. 1996: Our Holiday Wish List For 1996! Also: Scott Norton, Sid Vicious, Psicosis-Misterio, Barry Horowitz, Sabu.

Feb. 1996: Wrestling's Top Stars: What 1996 Has In Store For Them! Also: Goldust, Sherri-Parker, Mikey Whipwreck, Smokin' Gunns.

March 1996: His Excellency! How Bret Masterminded Diesel's Execution. Also: Jeff Jarrett, Giant, Jim Cornette, Survivor Series, Eddie Guerrero.

June 1996: Luger Or Hogan? If Sting Makes The Wrong Choice, He's Through!. Also: Road Warriors, Roddy Piper, Ahmed Johnson, Raven, Al Snow

Aug. 1996: The Greening Of Wrestling: How Sting & Shawn Will Become $50,000,000 Men! Also: Bodydonnas, Giant, Guerrera-Misterio, George Steele, Goldust & Marlena.

Oct. 1996 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Jake Roberts, Yokozuna, Giant-Konnan, Ahmed Johnson, Chris Jericho, strutters.

Nov. 1996: The Steiners: Feasting On A Buffet Of Violence. Also: Shawn Michaels, Sabu-Douglas, King of Ring, Eddie Guerrero, truck stop terror.

Dec. 1996: Three Women For Four Horsemen? The Hot Search For A Fourth Filly Has Begun! Also: Sunny & Gunns, Giant, Goldust, Cornette & Hart, Jerry Jarrett.

Holiday 1996 (Special Issue): The Tombstone: Wresling's Deadliest Finisher. Also: 1997 calendar, "Pyscho" Sid, Benoit-Misterio, Steiners-NWO, Pit Bull I, Jushin Liger.

Feb. 1997: Trouble In Egoville: Is There An NWO Within The NWO? Also: Chris Candido, Bret-Shawn, Ric Flair, Joey Styles, Liger-Benoit.

June 1997: Ahmed Johnson Reveals: "I Almost Joined The Nation Of Domination." Also: Mankind, Lex Luger, NWO, Davey Boy Smith, Jerry Graham.

Oct. 1997 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: LOD-PG-13, Rob Van Dam, Flair & Horsemen, Ken Shamrock, McMichael-White, Madd & Mama Maxxine.

Nov. 1997: WWF War Zone: Interfederation Battles Rock The Sport! Also: Ahmed Johnson, Curt Hennig, *Nueva* World Order, Chris Candido, Dan Severn.

Dec. 1997: Losing Is Bull! Has Dennis Rodman Had It With Hulk Hogan? Also: Steve Austin, Jarrett & Debra, Harts, Funk-Francine, Chris Jericho.

Holiday 1997 (Special Issue): The Steiners' Million-Dollar Gamble! Also: 1998 calendar, Alex Wright, The Patriot, Sgt. Slaughter, Turnbuckle Turkey Awards.

March 1998: Hart Transplant! The Truth Behind Bret's Defection To WCW. Also: Steve McMichael, Bam Bam Bigelow, Steve Austin, Disco Inferno.

April 1998 (Special Issue): The 1998 *Inside Wrestling* Computer Tournament. Also: Scott Hall, Marlena, Chris Benoit, Gunn & James, Sabu-Sandman.

May 1998: Is The WWF Screwing Another Hart? Also: Steve Austin, Dallas Page, Booker T, Larry Zbyszko, Al Snow.

June 1998: Exclusive! Steve Austin: The 10 Men Who Inspired His Toughness. Also: Dusty & Dustin, Perry Saturn, Mortis, Jeff Jarrett.

July 1998 (Special Issue): Top Stars Answer Your Personal Questions. Also: Jericho-Misterio Jr., Steve Austin, Sunny, Scott Steiner, Christopher-Michinoku.

Aug. 1998: WrestleMania XIV: The *Real* Winners And Losers. Also: Sunny, Curt Hennig, Dan Severn, Ultimo Dragon.

Sept. 1998: Power Surge! While The NWO Fiddles ... These Men Are Burning. Also: Sable, Ultimo-Guerrero, DeGeneration X-Owen, Rocky Maivia, Mad Russian-Rambo.

Oct. 1998 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Steve Austin, Taka Michinoku, Al Snow, Hollywood Hogan, Roddy Piper, Misawa-Kiwada.

Nov. 1998: Austin vs. Goldberg: Who Would Win And Why. Also: Bret Hart, Dude Love, Junkyard Dog, Helmsley-Michaels, Ray-Booker.

Dec. 1998: DDP's Big Bang Theories: Cutting Loose On Life, Love, & The Ultimate Buzz. Also: Sable-Jackie, Mankind, Hogan-Horace, D-Lo, APW.

Holiday 1998 (Special Issue): Kane: Still Haunted By His Day Of Glory. Also: Eddie Guerrero, Stevie Ray, Val Venis, turnbuckle turkeys, bonus calendar.

Jan. 1999: Seasons Greetings With A Bang (DDP & Kimberly). Also: Severn-Shamrock, Konnan, Arn, Undertaker-Kane, Chris Jericho.

Feb. 1999: Wrestling's Top Stars: What's Ahead For '99! Also: Hogan & Hart, D-Lo, Ken Shamrock, Slaughter-Snow.

March 1999: Estrange Situation! Insider Reveals: "Shane Still Resents His Father! Also: X-Pac, Hogan-Warrior, Jesse Ventura, Billy Kidman, Scott Norton.

April 1999 (Special Issue): The 1999 *Inside Wrestling* Computer Tournament. Also: Bossman-McMahon, Steiner & Bischoff, Hollywood Hogan, Wrath, Blue Meanie.

May 1999: Team Corporate's WrestleMania Scare! Mankind's Title Victory Could Have Spoiled Everything! Also: New Age Outlaws, Eddie Guerrero, Triple-H, Bill Goldberg.

June 1999: Still In-Vince-Ible! What Will It Take To Topple This Man? Also: Rey Misterio Jr., ECW, Triple-H, NWO, Blue Meanie.

July 1999 (Special Issue): Top Stars Answer Your Personal Questions. Also: Vince McMahon, Vincent, Eric Bischoff, Giant Baba.

Aug. 1999: WrestleMania XV: The *Real* Winners And Losers! Also: Vam Dam-Lynn, Saturn, Goldust, Steiner-Bagwell.

Sept. 1999: Shane, Come Back! Can Vince Survive Without His Son? Also: Bret Hart, Rick Rude, Ken Shamrock, Hogan-Flair-Page-Goldberg, Tajiri-Crazy.

Oct. 1999 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Mankind & Shamrock, Snow-Holly, Sting, Edge, Flair-Robinson, AIWF.

Nov. 1999: Crash At The Bash! Enter Sid, Viciously! Also: Undertaker-Austin, Acolytes, Master P, Debra, Justin Credible.

Dec. 1999: The Rock: What Makes You Love/Hate This Man? Also: Sting, Shane Douglas, Droz, Piper-Bagwell, Taz.

Holiday 1999 (Special Issue): The 1999 Turnbuckle Turkey Awards. Also: Sting, Dogg-Gunn, Undertaker, Steve Corino, 2000 calendar.

Jan. 2000: Dreaming Of An Extreme Christmas (Tommy Dreamer & Francine). Also: Goldberg, Al Snow, Billy Gunn, Doring & Road Kill, cigar-chompers.

Feb. 2000: Wrestling's Top Stars: What's Ahead For 2000! Vince-Bulldog, Mike Awesome, Sid Vicious, Gorilla Monsoon.

March 2000: Kevin Nash & Scott Hall: Getting Inside The Outsiders' Heads. Also: Dudleys, Jerry Lynn, Vince-DX, Kimberly, Zero Gravity.

April 2000 (Special Issue): The Y2K Computer Tournament. Also: Jarrett-PTB, Christopher & Taylor, Lou E. Dangerously, Lawler-Fantastico.

May 2000: Hey, Scott, Watch Your Back! The NWO Is Setting You Up! Also: Hacksaw Duggan, Rikishi Phatu, Test, Mike Awesome.

June 2000: Chris Jericho's Deadliest Enemy: His Ego! Also: Tazz, Kidman-Torrie, Nash-Funk, Buff Bagwell, New Jack.

July 2000 (Special Issue): It's True! Kurt Angle Will Be Hotter Than The Rock In Six Months! Also: Elizabeth, Steve Blackman, Norman Smiley, Spike Dudley, personal questions.

Aug. 2000: WrestleMania 2000: The *Real* Winners & Losers! Also: Dustin-Funk, Eddie Guerrero, ECW extreme?, WCW analysis.

Sept. 2000: Those Damn Dudleys! Is There An Evil Act Fans Won't Cheer? Also: Billy Kidman, Taka Michinoku, Yoshihiro Tajiri, Jeff Jarrett.

Oct. 2000 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Kurt Angle, Malenko-Saturn, Lance Storm, Tori, Jumbo Tsuruta, ECW headliners.

Nov. 2000: When Will Triple-H Proclaim ... "I'm Sick Of Being A McMahon!" Also: Trish Stratus, Shane Douglas, Hulk Hogan, Kevin Nash, Yoshihiro Tajiri.

[FULL-COLOR BEGINNING WITH JANUARY 2001]

Jan. 2001: Olympic Games: What Kind Of Angle Has Curt Been Running? Also: Tazz-Lawler, Big Vito, Stacy Keibler, Chris Benoit, Kid Kash, Chyna.

March 2001: Who Knows The Rock's Role? Is He Ditching Wrestling For Hollywood? Also: Trish, Billy Gunn, Jarrett-Sting, C.W. Anderson, Booker T.

May 2001: The WrestleMania Tip Sheet: What You Must Know About The Event Of The Year! Also: Scott Steiner, Dudleys, Malenko & Lita, Shane Douglas, Raven.

Aug. 2001: Game Face! We Haven't Seen Hunter's Ugly Side ... But Just Wait! Also: WWF vs. WCW, Kurt Angle, Vince McMahon, Booker T, Hardys & Lita, Haas brothers, WCW babes.

Oct. 2001: Will Debra Ice Stone-Cold? Also: Vince vs. Shane, Chyna, William Regal, former Big Three stars.

Dec. 2001: The WWF-WCW Dream Matches We Really Want! Also: Tazz, Dudleys, Perry Saturn, Johnny Valentine, 100 WCW facts.

☐ MAR 78	☐ DEC 84	☐ AUG 88	☐ AUG 91	☐ DEC 95	☐ MAY 99
☐ APR 78	☐ MAR 85	☐ OCT 88	☐ SEP 91	☐ JAN 96	☐ JUN 99
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INSIDE WRESTLING

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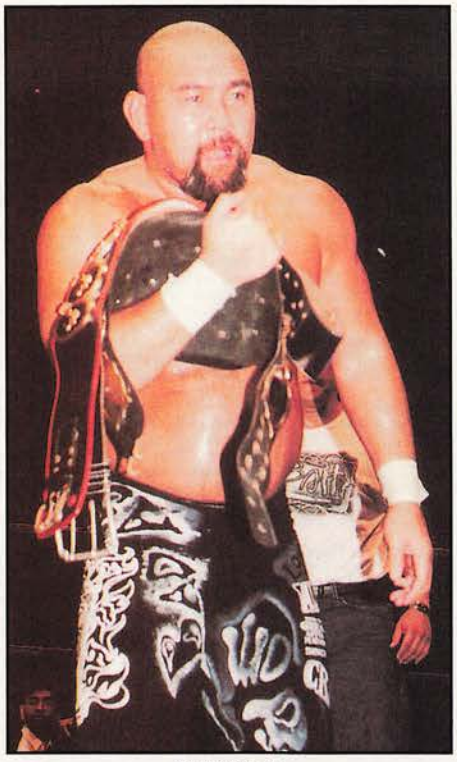
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

TOP 10

1. **CHRIS JERICHO**
   225, Winnipeg, Manitoba
   (5) WWF World champion
2. **THE ROCK**
   272, Miami, FL
   (2) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
3. **KEIJI MUTO**
   245, Yamanashi, Japan
   (3) All-Japan Triple Crown champion
4. **STEVE AUSTIN**
   252, Victoria, TX
   (1) No. 3 contender: WWF World title
5. **JUN AKIYAMA**
   225, Hiroshima, Japan
   (6) GHC heavyweight champion
6. **EDGE**
   240, Toronto, Ontario
   (9) WWF Intercontinental champion
7. **TRIPLE-H**
   253, Greenwich, CT
   (-) No. 4 contender: WWF World title
8. **KURT ANGLE**
   233, Pittsburgh, PA
   (4) No. 5 contender: WWF World title
9. **ROB VAN DAM**
   237, Battle Creek, MI
   (7) No. 6 contender: WWF World title
10. **LEVIATHAN**
    325, parts unknown
    (10) OVW heavyweight champion



Keiji Muto

TAG TEAMS

1. **SPIKE DUDLEY & TAZZ**
   Combined weight: 403 pounds
   (-) WWF World tag team champions
2. **BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY**
   Combined weight: 585 pounds
   (1) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
3. **TAIYO KEA & KEIJI MUTO**
   Combined weight: 480 pounds
   (2) All-Japan & IWGP International tag team champions
4. **BILLY GUNN & CHUCK PALUMBO**
   Combined weight: 524 pounds
   (-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
5. **SATOSHI KOJIMA & HIROYOSHI TENZAN**
   Combined weight: 493 pounds
   (-) No. 1 contenders: All-Japan & IWGP tag titles
6. **ALBERT & SCOTTY TOO HOTTY**
   Combined weight: 556 pounds
   (7) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title
7. **BRADSHAW & FAAROOQ**
   Combined weight: 599 pounds
   (5) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title
8. **JEFF & MATT HARDY**
   Combined weight: 422 pounds
   (9) No. 5 contenders: WWF World tag title
9. **ROB CONWAY & NICK DINSMORE**
   Combined weight: 466 pounds
   (-) OVW Southern tag team champions
10. **THE NEW HEAVENLY BODIES**
    Combined weight: 465 pounds
    (-) NWA tag team champions

WWF

World Champion:
CHRIS JERICHO
(4) 225, Winnipeg, Manitoba

1—**EDGE** *(2) 240, Toronto, Ontario*
2—**THE ROCK** *(1) 272, Miami, FL*
3—**STEVE AUSTIN** *(C) 252, Victoria, TX*
4—**TRIPLE-H** *(–) 253, Greenwich, CT*
5—**KURT ANGLE** *(3) 233, Pittsburgh, PA*
6—**ROB VAN DAM** *(5) 237, Battle Creek, MI*
7—**THE UNDERTAKER** *(7) 304, Dallas, TX*
8—**BOOKER T** *(–) 250, Houston, TX*
9—**CHRISTIAN** *(8) 225, Toronto, Ontario*
10—**WILLIAM REGAL** *(9) 257, Blackpool, England*

OVW

OVW Champion:
LEVIATHAN
(C) 325, parts unknown

1—**FLASH** *(4) 225, Detroit, MI*
2—**THE MACHINE** *(1) 241, Louisville, KY*
3—**BULL BUCHANAN** *(5) 325, Marietta, GA*
4—**RANDY ORTON** *(2) 265, St. Louis, MO*
5—**NICK DINSMORE** *(7) 226, Jefferson, IN*
6—**D-LO BROWN** *(–) 281, Chicago, IL*
7—**DAMAJA** *(–) 240, Seymour, IN*
8—**PROTOTYPE** *(6) 260, Los Angeles, CA*
9—**STEVE BRADLEY** *(–) 239, Raymond, NH*
10—**SEAN O'HAIRE** *(–) 270, Hilton Head, SC*

NWA

NWA Champion:
SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(1) 287, Gifu, Japan

1—**QUINN MAGNUM** *(8) 265, Pittsburgh, PA*
2—**HOTSTUFF HERNANDEZ** *(5) 280, Houston, TX*
3—**DAN SEVERN** *(–) 262, Coldwater, MI*
4—**GARY STEELE** *(3) 241, London, England*
5—**JOHNNY ALLBLACK** *(7) 254, Honolulu, HI*
6—**DIRK CIGLAR** *(–) 195, Mount Pleasant, PA*
7—**TOM BRANDI** *(9) 248, Norristown, PA*
8—**MIKE SAMSON** *(–) 220, Brooklyn, NY*
9—**ICEMAN BUCK Q** *(–) 225, Tampa, FL*
10—**BRANDON K** *(–) 202, Dunbar, PA*

NEW JAPAN

IWGP Champion:
TITLE VACANT

1—**YUJI NAGATA** *(2) 228, Tokyo, Japan*
2—**TADAO YASUDA** *(–) 310, Tokyo, Japan*
3—**MANABU NAKANISHI** *(6) 235, Tokyo, Japan*
4—**GIANT SILVA** *(–) 494, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*
5—**KENSUKE SASAKI** *(1) 251, Tokyo, Japan*
6—**MASA CHONO** *(5) 235, Tokyo, Japan*
7—**KEIJI MUTO** *(3) 245, Yamanashi, Japan*
8—**RICK STEINER** *(–) 257, Detroit, MI*
9—**JUSHIN LIGER** *(8) 222, Hiroshima, Japan*
10—**KENDO KA SHIN** *(10) 195, Tokyo, Japan*

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

For period ended January 19, 2002

APOCALYPSE WRESTLING FEDERATION: Champion—Joey Knight; **1**—James Champagne; **2**—Slade; **3**—Tony Mack; **4**—Jaguar Vijay Singh; **5**—Billy Flynn; **6**—Fabian Stokes; **7**—Danny Dynamic; **8**—Wrestling Classic; **9**—Vladimir Urkov; **10**—Charlie Brown.

BORDER CITY WRESTLING: Champion—Johnny Swinger; **1**—Scott D'Amore; **2**—Larry Destiny; **3**—El Tornado; **4**—Simon Diamond; **5**—Little Guido Maritato; **6**—Nova; **7**—Gutter; **8**—Otis Apollo; **9**—The Hacker; **10**—Chris Sabin.

CENTRAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Terry Alan; **1**—Jimmy Valiant; **2**—Super Nova; **3**—Miss Diamond; **4**—Maddawg; **5**—Tommy Green; **6**—Mongoose; **7**—Jimmy Justice; **8**—Joe Price; **9**—Jad Lung; **10**—Skip Sherwood.

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Switchblade; **1**—Brock Singleton; **2**—Shane Shadows; **3**—Johnny Graham; **4**—Mason Hunter; **5**—King Kong Bundy; **6**—Brian Johnson; **7**—Nikolai Volkoff; **8**—Combat Kid; **9**—John Balsamo; **10**—Bob Keller.

EXODUS WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—George South; **1**—Jason King; **2**—Rick Karloff; **3**—Gary Royal; **4**—Cruel Connection II; **5**—Masked Superstar II; **6**—George South Jr.; **7**—Rick Morton; **8**—Jimmy Valiant; **9**—Ivan Koloff; **10**—Bobby Eaton.

GLOBAL PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Bull Schmitt; **1**—Matt Murphy; **2**—Blade Boudreaux; **3**—Treach Phillips Jr.; **4**—The Madd Chef; **5**—Dexter Hardaway; **6**—Dru Jordan; **7**—Tim Warcloud; **8**—Wade Chism; **9**—Tojo Jr.; **10**—Rude Dawg.

INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION: Champion—Roman; **1**—Josh Daniels; **2**—Kevin Knight; **3**—Biggie Biggs; **4**—Damian Adams; **5**—Rob Eckos; **6**—Hadrian; **7**—The Patriot; **8**—Rapid Fire Maldonado; **9**—Steve Corino; **10**—Salvatore Sincere.

INT'L PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Tom Brandi; **1**—The Sandman; **2**—Crowbar; **3**—Billy Redwood; **4**—King Kong Bundy; **5**—Julio Dinero; **6**—Little Guido Maritato; **7**—Mike Quackenbush; **8**—Adam Flash; **9**—Johnny Graham; **10**—The Hungarian Barbarian.

IPW HARDCORE WRESTLING: Champion—Billy Fives; **1**—Scoot Andrews; **2**—A.J. Styles; **3**—Jeff Bradley; **4**—Rastaman; **5**—Mike Sullivan; **6**—David Young; **7**—Mike Shane; **8**—Pat Powers; **9**—Todd Shane; **10**—Pat McGroin.

NATIONAL WRESTLING LEAGUE: Champion—John Rambo; **1**—King Kong Bundy; **2**—Jerry Lawler; **3**—Spazman Anthony; **4**—Jimmy Snuka; **5**—Van Hammer; **6**—Flex Fenom; **7**—Rick Morton; **8**—Hyjinx; **9**—The Freak; **10**—Gillberg.

NWA SOUTHWEST: Champion—Mike Anthony; **1**—J.P. Black; **2**—Chaz Taylor; **3**—Kevin Northcutt; **4**—Hellraiser Hark; **5**—The Devastator; **6**—Ikaika Loa; **7**—Chris Young; **8**—Rudy Boy Gonzalez; **9**—Brian Benham; **10**—John Nathan.

OKLAHOMA PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Splash Jackson; **1**—Vinnie Valentino; **2**—Rocco Valentino; **3**—Big Daddy Moore; **4**—Luc LaPointe; **5**—Brandon Groom; **6**—Terry Montana; **7**—Jean Paul; **8**—Red Eagle; **9**—Bolo; **10**—Beau Dalton.

ALL-JAPAN

Triple Crown Champion:
KEIJI MUTO
(C) 245, Yamanashi, Japan

1—TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(2) 245, Ashikaga, Japan
2—HIROSHI HASE
(–) 225, Tokyo, Japan
3—GENICHIRO TENRYU
(1) 235, Tokyo, Japan
4—YOJI ANJOH
(–) 234, Tokyo, Japan
5—TAIYO KEA
(3) 235, Honolulu, HI
6—MITSUYA NAGAI
(7) 238, Hokkaido, Japan
7—GEORGE HINES
(10) 278, Houston, TX
8—STEVE WILLIAMS
(4) 265, Norman, OK
9—JOHNNY SMITH
(–) 235, Manchester, England
10—MIKE BARTON
(–) 263, Austin, TX

PRO WRESTLING NOAH

GHC Champion:
JUN AKIYAMA
(C) 225, Hiroshima, Japan

1—MITSUHARU MISAWA
(2) 228, Ashikaga, Japan
2—VADER
(1) 450, Denver, CO
3—TAKAO OMORI
(5) 221, Tokyo, Japan
4—YOSHIHIRO TAKAYAMA
(4) 270, Sapporo, Japan
5—AKIRA TAUE
(7) 265, Chichibu, Japan
6—YOSHINARI OGAWA
(–) 202, Fichigi, Japan
7—TAKESHI RIKIOH
(–) 286, Sakurai, Japan
8—2 COLD SCORPIO
(10) 222, Denver, CO
9—TAKESHI MORISHIMA
(9) 281, Tokyo, Japan
10—AKITOSHI SAITO
(3) 250, Nagoya, Japan

EMLL

EMLL Champion:
UNIVERSO DOS MIL
(C) 240, Mexico City, Mexico

1—NEGRO CASAS
(4) 175, Mexico City, Mexico
2—SHOCKER
(–) 185, Guadalajara, Mexico
3—FELINO
(–) 165, Mexico City, Mexico
4—FUERZA GUERRERA
(–) 175, Mexico City, Mexico
5—PIERROTH JR.
(–) 251, Cuernavaca, Mexico
6—ATLANTIS
(3) 180, Guadalajara, Mexico
7—EL HIJO DEL SANTO
(2) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico
8—EMILIO CHARLES JR.
(1) 222, Mexico City, Mexico
9—DR. WAGNER JR.
(–) 215, Mexico City, Mexico
10—RAYO DE JALISCO JR.
(–) 270, Guadalajara, Mexico

AAA

AAA Champion:
LATIN LOVER
(C) 190, Monterrey, Mexico

1—HEAVY METAL
(3) 180, Mexico City, Mexico
2—PERRO AGUAYO JR.
(1) 165, Zacatecas, Mexico
3—HECTOR GARZA
(2) 220, Monterrey, Mexico
4—EL CANEK
(8) 235, Mexico City, Mexico
5—PIRATA MORGAN
(4) 221, Mexico City, Mexico
6—MASCARA SAGRADA
(–) 249, Veracruz, Mexico
7—ABISMO NEGRO
(–) 210, Pachua, Mexico
8—ELECTRO SHOCK
(7) 208, Mexico City, Mexico
9—CIBERNETICO
(6) 235, Mexico City, Mexico
10—EL TEXANO
(5) 225, Mexico City, Mexico

Ratings Analysis

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 22 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important–and respected–ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Welcome back to "The Game"! We didn't think it would take long at all for **Triple-H** to jump back into the mix with the WWF's most powerful players, and it sure didn't. On TV, he got right in the faces of **Kurt Angle**, **The Undertaker**, and **Steve Austin** within days of his hyped-to-the-max return, and on house shows, he hadn't been back but a week when he was battling undisputed WWF World champion **Chris Jericho** one-on-one (and beating him by disqualification).

Triple-H

Our ratings policy regarding superstars returning from injury or hiatus is a very simple one. They don't get back into the Top 10 (or even the ratings for their promotion) until they've earned it with their performances in actual in-ring competition. No matter how memorable Triple-H's return to WWF on January 7 was, it had zero bearing on our ratings. The rousing ovation he received that night had no bearing on our ratings. To make the ratings, he needed to wrestle.

And wrestle he did. He warmed up for his TV return on *Raw* by taking part in tag team matches during the previous weekend. That alone was certainly not enough to earn him a spot in our prestigious Top 10. Yet you see him ranked seventh on that list on page 92. It was the fact that he was booked against the WWF champ so quickly after his return (and more importantly, that he looked so strong against Y2J and dominated their matches) that convinced us to give him that spot.

Barring further injury, Mr. Helmsley figures to be a regular in the Top 10 for quite a while again.

Some more tag team stuff. Yes, it seems like we almost always have something to write about the state of tag team wrestling in this column, and we're right back at it again this month. We noted in this space last month that we were hesitant to believe that the unusual twosome of **Albert** and **Scotty Too Hotty** would last long. We wouldn't have been surprised to see them make only that one appearance in the ratings as a team, but they're in for a second straight month, and they've moved up one spot, from seventh to sixth.

Right now, we're not sure which team is stranger, Albert and Scotty or this new **Chuck (Palumbo)** and **Billy (Gunn)** pairing. Their feud them is not exactly on par with **The Steiners** vs. **The Road Warriors**. Chuck and Billy have dominated it thus far (hence their number-four ranking) and look like they're primed for a run with the WWF tag team belts. Perhaps **Goldust** could be their manager.

At least we have one promising new team in the mix, that of **Spike Dudley** and **Tazz**. As WWF World tag team champs (at press time), they held the top spot in the tag team ratings. We can only hope these two stay together, as they have exhibited good chemistry and have gone over well with fans as an underdog team, especially in matches against **Buh Buh Ray** and **D-Von Dudley**.

One other point that needs to be made in regard to this month's tag team ratings involves the inclusion of **Jeff** and **Matt Hardy** at number eight. We chose to rank them despite the fact that they (along with **Lita**) disappeared from WWF TV near the end of last year. Official word out of the WWF was that the brothers were being given a break from TV so that they could come back a little fresher.

Matt Hardy

At the same time, the WWF creative team had the opportunity to ponder where the careers of the Hardys and Lita were headed. The feud between Matt and Jeff, as well as the splitting up of Lita and a jealous and paranoid Matt, wasn't going as well as many had hoped. The brothers' showdown at Vengeance, while intriguing, wasn't the aerial war that had been anticipated and thus was a letdown. Is there a way to salvage the feud, or, since Matt had stood up for Jeff against The Undertaker just prior to their disappearance from TV, would it be better to keep them together as a team?

If what was happening at WWF house shows in early- and mid-January was any indication (it might not be), more tag team wrestling is in the Hardys' future. They wrestled in some high-profile matches as a team (with Lita in their corner) and got along fine. That's why they made our ratings as a team.

That about does it for now! As always, if you have any questions or comments regarding our ratings or what you see here, we'd love to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

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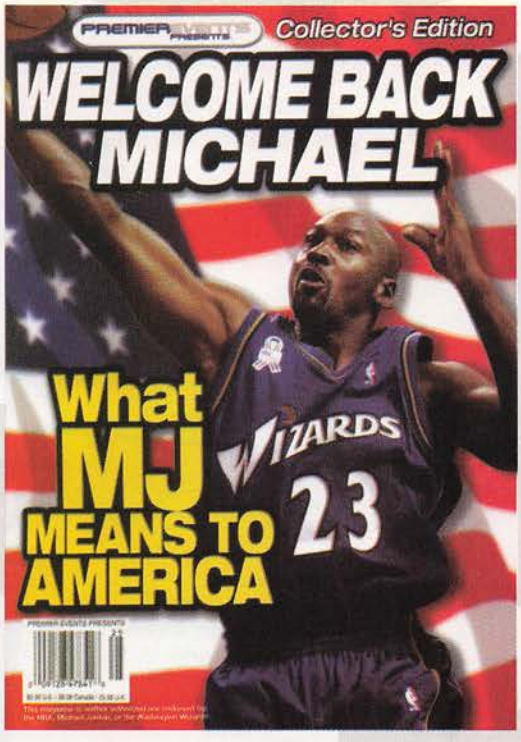

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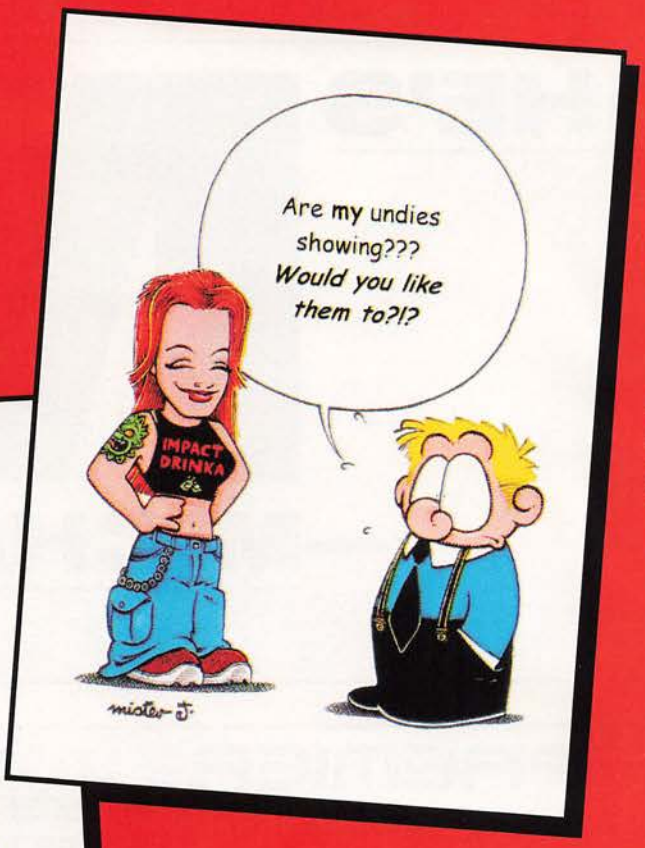
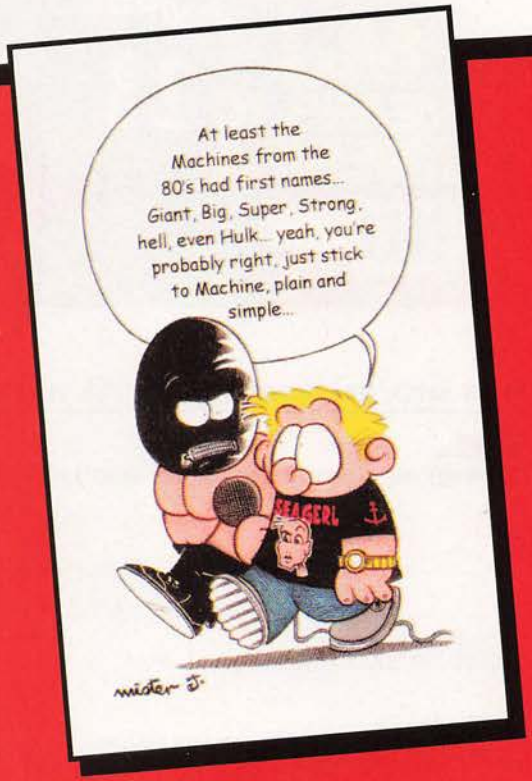
drawing BLOOD

By Jason Conlan




At least the Machines from the 80's had first names... Giant, Big, Super, Strong, hell, even Hulk... yeah, you're probably right, just stick to Machine, plain and simple...
mister J.

I never said you were fat. What I said, was that the last time you went out in a Malcolm X shirt, a helicopter tried to land on you.
RIKISHI
mister J.

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FALL/82 Section: Sexiest Superstar; Albano's teams, Hernandez, Mascaras-Sheik.

SUMMER/83 Section: Bob Backlund; Lawler, Gagne, Sheik, Mascaras, then and now.

FALL/83 Section: WCW Stars; Steve O, Studd, Bruiser.

SPRING/84 Section: Secret Fears; **Color Action Gallery:** Tommy Rich.

WINTER/84 Section: Sexiest Superstar; **Color Action Gallery:** Billy Jack Haynes.

SPRING/85 Section: 10 Most Hated Men; **Color Action Gallery:** Roddy Piper.

SPRING/88 Section: Don't Trust These Men! **Dream Match:** Sammartino vs. Hogan; **Color Action Gallery:** Randy Savage.

WINTER/88 Section: Sexiest Superstar; **Dream Match:** Flair vs. Savage; **Color Action Gallery:** Rick Rude.

FALL/89 Section: 10 Men Who Will Rule Wrestling In The '90s; **Dream Match:** Hogan & Steamboat vs. Savage & Flair; **Color Action Gallery:** The Ultimate Warrior.

WINTER/89 Section: Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Elizabeth vs. Sherri; **Color Action Gallery:** Blanchard & Anderson.

SUMMER/90 Section: Greatest Finishing Maneuvers; **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Luger; **Color Action Gallery:** Hulk Hogan.

AUG/90 Section: Don't Trust These Men! **Dream Match:** Ultimate Warrior vs. Flair; **Color Action Gallery:** Norman.

OCT/90: Section: 50 Strongest Men; **Dream Match:** Tag Team Extravaganza; **Colot Action Gallery:** Steve "Dr. Death" Wiliams.

DEC/90 Section: Sexiest Superstars; **Dream Match:** Hennig-Rude; **Color Action Gallery:** Missy Hyatt.

FEB/91 Section: Wrestling's Next Champions; **Dream Match:** Sting vs. Luger; **Color Action Gallery:** Legion of Doom.

APRIL/91 Section: Teams We'd Like To See; **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Ultimate Warrior; **Color Action Gallery:** Sid Vicious.

JUNE/91 Section: Wrestling's Best; **Dream Match:** Strongest Man Competition; **Color Action Gallery:** Ric Flair

AUG/91 Section: Top 20 Stars; **Dream Match:** LOD vs. Steiners; **Color Action Gallery:** Curt Hennig.

OCT/91 Section: These Men Must Be Banned!; **Dream Match:** Andre-Gigante; **Color Action Gallery:** The Undertaker.

DEC/91 Section: Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Battle Royal of Champions; **Color Action Gallery:** Steiners.

FEB/92 Section: Wrestlers To Make '92 Sizzle; **Dream Match:** Bret Hart vs. Sting; **Color Action Gallery:** Cactus Jack.

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OCT/92 Section: Overrated/Underrated; **Dream Match:** Michaels vs. Jannetty; Money Inc., Olympic wrestlers.

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JAN/93 Section: Great Arenas; **Dream Match:** Halloween Horrors Battle Royal; Steamboat-Austin, Undertaker-Flair, Pillman.

MARCH/93 Section: Hot '93 Wrestlers; **Dream Match:** Hart vs. Simmons; Steamboat-Pillman, Tyson to wrestle.

APRIL/93 Section: Tag Team We'd Like To See; **Dream Match:** Dusty & Dustin vs. Bill & Erik Watts; Badd, Vader.

JUNE/93 Section: Wrestling's Best; **Dream Match:** Vader vs. Yokozuna; Missy & Flair, Windham, Cactus & Orndorff.

AUG/93 Section: Top 20 Stars; **Dream Match:** Rude vs. Madusa; Duggan, Gilbert, Watts, Wippleman.

OCT/93 Section: Ban These Men; **Dream Match:** Hogan & Beefcake vs. Sting & Davey Boy; Miss Texas, Michaels-Doink, Dusty & Dustin, R&Rs.

DEC/93 Section: Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Lex Luger's challenge; Michaels, Hawk, Adams, Eaton & Benoit.

SPRING/94 Section: 10 Stars To Make '94 Sizzle; **Dream Match:** Cactus vs. Doink; Sting, Steiners, Sabu.

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WINTER/94 Section: Turnbuckle Turkey Awards! **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Hart vs. Vader; Lawler, Flair, Douglas.

SPRING/95 Section: Personal Questions; **Dream Match:** All-time NWA title tourney; Simmons, Hogan, Cornette, Backlund.

SUMMER/95 Section: Top 20 Stars; **Dream Match:** All-time WWF title tourney; DiBiase, Steiners, Inoki-Sting.

FALL/95 Section: Top 20 tag teams; **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Flair; LT, Sid, Sandman, Lawler, Hogan.

WINTER/95 Section: Superstars Of Tomorrow; **Dream Match:** Undertaker vs. Vader; Diesel-Ramon, Jarrett, Wright, Michaels.

SPRING/96 Section: Report cards; **Dream Match:** Wrestling's Dream World; Diesel, Gibson, Luger-Hogan, Ramon-Kid, Mexicans.

SPRING/97 Section: Top 20 Stars; **Dream Match:** Hall & Nash vs. New Diesel & New Razor; Hogan-Piper, Jarrett, Yoko, Ahmed.

SUMMER/97 Section: Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Piper vs. Austin; NWO, NOD, Michaels, Liger.

FALL/97 Section: 20 Tag Teams We'd Love To See; **Dream Match:** Hogan & Savage vs. Hall & Nash; Hogan & Rodman, Bret-Vince, Taz-Sabu, The Giant.

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AUG/98 Section: Ranking The Sport's 50 Strongest Men; **Dream Match:** WWF vs. WCW vs. ECW; McMahon, S. Steiner, Faarooq, Hall & Nash, Dudleys.

OCT/98 Section: Wrestling's Dangerous Dozen; **Dream Match:** Michaels vs. Helmsley; Dustin, Hogan-Warrior, Ray-Booker, NWA at 50.

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FEB/99 Section: Superstars' Report Cards; **Dream Match:** Sting vs. Warrior; Flair-Bischoff, Dusty-Hall, New Age Outlaws, McMahon-Bearer-Austin, Pirata-Vampiro.

APRIL/99 Section: 1998 In Review; **Dream Match:** Ventura vs. Hogan; Sable, Flair, Michaels-McMahon, Wrestling Museum.

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AUG/99 Section: 10 Stars Who Are Ruining The Sport; **Dream Match:** Vince vs. Bret; Konnan, X-Pac, Mankind, Flair.

OCT/99 Section: Top 20 Hardcore Heroes; **Dream Match:** Shamrock vs. S. Steiner; Owen, McMahons-Undertaker, Taz-Van Dam, Pillman '99.

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FEB/00 Section: Superstars' Report Cards; **Dream Match:** McMahons vs. Flairs; Edge & Christian, D-Lo, Hall & Nash, Guido.

APRIL/00 Section: 1999 In Review; **Dream Match:** Ultimate Cat Fight; Sting, Vader, Runnels, Baldies.

JUNE/00 Section: The Top 25 Wrestlers Of The '90s; **Dream Match:** Mankind-Rock vs. DDP-Goldberg; Hardys, Rock, Madusa, Goldberg.

AUG/00 Section: Best Match Ever; **Dream Match:** Jarrett vs. Jericho; Kane, Edge & Christian, Young, Cyrus, Wall, Kelly.

OCT/00 Section: Dream Roster; **Dream Match:** Dream Roster Challenge; DDP, Crash, Goldberg, Dreamer.

DEC/00 Section: 2000 Wrestling Guide; **Dream Match:** Survivor Smackdown; Rock, Booker, Malenko, Awesome, Van Dam.

APR/01 Section: Report Cards; **Dream Match:** Team WWF vs. Team World; Angle, S. Steiner, Miss Holly, Nash.

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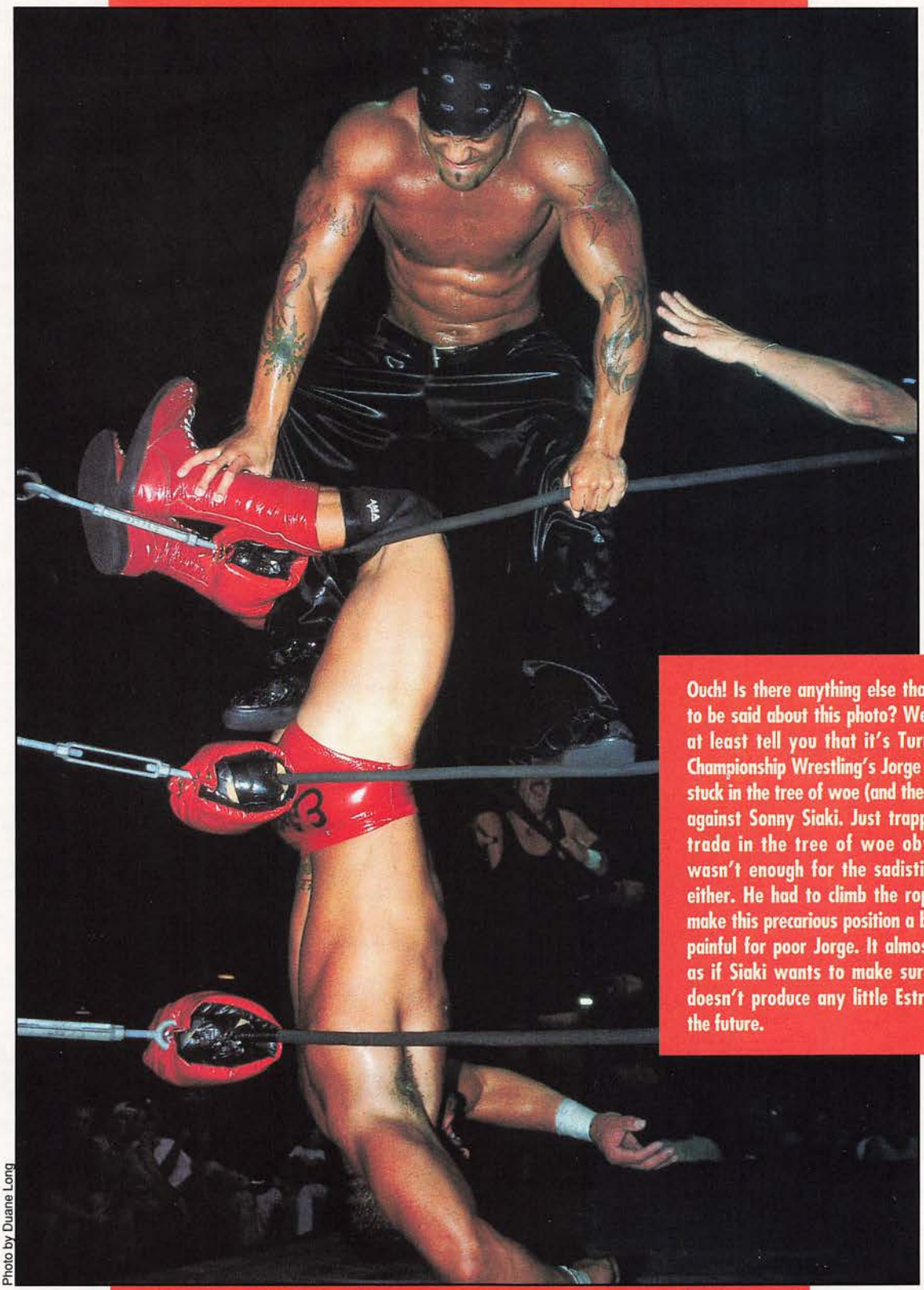

Photo by Duane Long

Ouch! Is there anything else that needs to be said about this photo? We should at least tell you that it's Turnbuckle Championship Wrestling's Jorge Estrada stuck in the tree of woe (and then some) against Sonny Siaki. Just trapping Estrada in the tree of woe obviously wasn't enough for the sadistic Siaki, either. He had to climb the ropes and make this precarious position a bit more painful for poor Jorge. It almost looks as if Siaki wants to make sure Jorge doesn't produce any little Estradas in the future.

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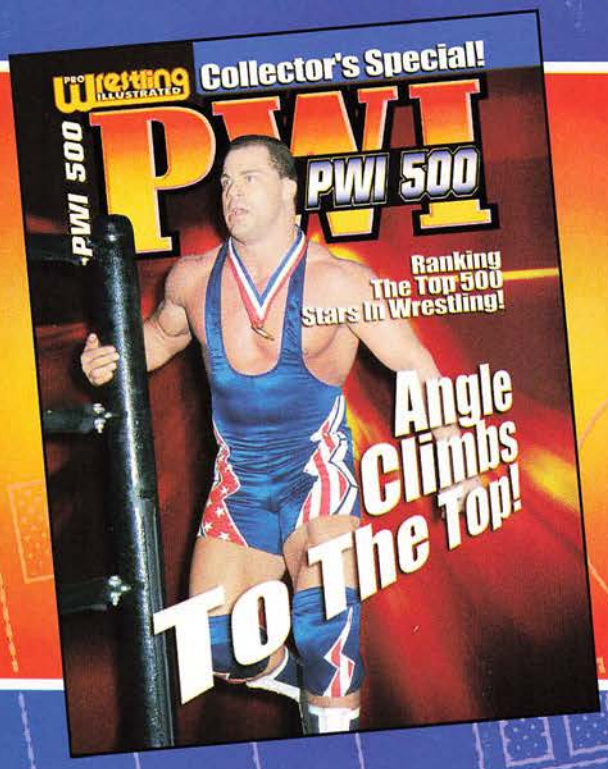

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